

AROUND the FIRE

NEWS FROM CRYSTAL PEAKS YOUTH RANCH

SPRING 2007

Reunion with Focus on the Family

BY TROY MEEDER

“It takes a village.” I have heard this simple yet profound statement many times over the years.

Not one of us exists as an island. God uses all of us together to weave an intricate tapestry of simple people using simple gifts in the support of others. The seasoned business man shares with the beginner, the master gardener shares with the ‘green thumb’ hopeful, a large ministry lends support of the young fledgling.

Such was the case in 2004 for Crystal Peaks. We had been working for many years in relative obscurity when the call came. Received into our ‘one line, one chair’ office, it was Focus On The Family requesting an interview with Kim. Her first book, *Hope Rising*, had been ‘placed’ into the hands of Dr Dobson and he was now interested in what was going on in this small youth ranch in Central Oregon. Who would have ever dreamed that our lives and countless others across the globe would be forever changed from the outcome of that first interview. *The larger ministry chose to fulfill the role of being the hands and feet of a loving God... and in so doing... helped the smaller.*

As Kim and I, for a second time, walked through the doors of the main entrance to Focus on The Family, my thoughts returned to three years ago when we crossed this threshold for the first time. I was deeply moved when it became quietly clear how much this second visit simply felt like coming home. Dear friends were awaiting us and we were once again awestruck by the remarkable sense of ‘kinship’ woven by our Gracious God.

Immediately we were greeted with a warm smile and hug from Jacci Knight, the radio broadcast executive producer. She graciously

received both of us and began the preparation for the upcoming interview. My thoughts began to turn toward years past. I wondered if our “Focus family” would ever know *how much* their assistance has changed the course of Crystal Peaks? Would they ever understand how deeply God has used them? Slowly, my heart began to rotate toward a simple question “God, can You use me in a similar way? Lord... in a deeper way... help me to become Your hands and feet for others.”

As we walked into his office, Dr. Dobson’s eyes twinkled a bit as Kim reached out to hug him. His face reflected the same warmth, integrity and dignity that I remembered from before. It appeared that nearly three years hadn’t changed him a bit.

We were cordially greeted like old friends. I’m quite certain that everyone feels this way when they meet this extraordinary man. Once again, I felt honored to be with him. Not long after our time in Dr. Dobson’s office began, we were joined by Dr Bill Maier.



Continued on page 7



Information Clinics

We feel so blessed to be able to share with those abroad who desire to start a ranch program that is similar to Crystal Peaks. We have done this annually for the last several years through our Information Clinics. Our 2006 event was wonderful beyond words. Because of the increasing popularity of these Clinics, we will be hosting two Information Clinics in 2007. The dates will be **May 23–26** and also **June 6–9**.

All areas pertaining to starting and maintaining a similar ministry are covered during this time. This includes: Basic Natural Horsemanship, Horse Management, Child & Horse Safety, Working with Kids, Volunteer Programming, Fundraising, Obtaining a 501(c)(3) & Business Information. Many of the sessions are lecture/Q&A type format while other sessions will be observing the horse program in action. The cost of the Clinic is \$250 per person, which includes all meals while you are here. If you are interested in attending one of our Clinics, please mail in our Registration Form along with our Release

Forms, which can be found on our website or by contacting our office. Because of the long days and in-depth information, we do ask that the minimum age for participants be 18.

For those who will be flying, there are two airport options. Redmond Municipal Airport is about 30 minutes away, but is quite small. You may find better fares by flying into Portland International Airport and driving the remaining distance of 3 hours (it is a beautiful drive).

The ranch is located between Bend and Sisters, 15 minutes from each. Lodging can be found in either city. Bend Chamber of Commerce: www.visitbend.com, 541-382-8048. Sisters Chamber of Commerce: www.sisterschamber.com, 541-549-0251.

If you have further questions, please contact Julie Love at jlove@cpyr.org or (541) 389-6523.



Bozeman's Perspective

BY KIM MEEDER

I knew that he was going to be big... but just *how* big didn't really sink in until I watched him back out of the trailer. Even the dark shroud of a cold November night could not diminish the fact that he was a truly magnificent GIANT! Exhaling enormous clouds of frozen breath, the Clydesdale cross that stood towering over me was easily more than 17 hands in height and approximately 2000 pounds in weight. To date, there is no doubt that he is the largest horse to ever set foot upon our ranch. Staring up into his uniquely rare blue eyes, I was left to wonder...

The setting for the teaching began when the Israelites were suddenly challenged by a monstrous warrior named Goliath. He stood over NINE FEET tall and his soul purpose in life was to destroy anything or anyone who challenged him. Daily, he stood on a distant hillside and shouted taunts at those who stood for the Most High God. Understandably, those who heard him were deeply distressed and even shook with fear. From their perspective, they cowered beneath the most terrifyingly ferocious giant of a man they had ever seen... but, that was only *their* perspective.

God's perspective is quite different...

David did not shrink back from the confrontation... but instead, RAN forward and conquered it!

David's actions clearly communicate that when he looked up at the mountainous Goliath... instead of seeing impossible odds of fighting a giant... he saw a target so BIG that HE COULDN'T MISS! The whole battle came down to "perspective"... are we going to choose ours... or God's?

Needless to say, I now look at 'Bozeman' the giant horse with a new perspective. Instead of focusing on all of the 'what if's,' I choose to focus on all the 'what can be's.' He is my sweet daily reminder that the perspective I choose is *my choice* to make everyday.

Perhaps there is a 'giant' shouting at you today. Remember that as towering and all encompassing as 'he' might seem... he is *no match* for the Lord Almighty... for 'It is HIS battle, not ours!' Remember my Friend, we each get to *choose* how we engage our giants... it's just a matter of perspective.



"Lord, how are we going to safely handle this massive beast?"

It didn't take long before the wise words from my sister began to filter back into my heart through my memory. She had recently shared with me a wonderful message that she had heard earlier at her church. Her pastor's message was about 'Perspective'... more precisely, choosing between our perspective or God's.

and a little boy named David chose it over his own understanding. For when young David finally made his way to the front of the crowd and looked up at Goliath... instead of focusing on the terror inspired by this behemoth... he focused on his Almighty God instead. When Goliath began to revile the boy, David shouted back, "I come to you in the name of the Lord Almighty — the God of the armies of Israel... It is HIS battle, not ours!" (1Sam. 17:41-51).



LESSONS *from the Round-pen*

BY LAURIE SACHER



When the weather turns cold and the days get shorter our usually bustling ranch slows down a bit. The laughter and chatter of hundreds of wonderful kids is subsided and our wonderful horses get a well deserved rest. On cold mornings they can be seen gathered together for shared warmth under the trees and wind shelters. When the sun pokes through the clouds they stand lazily soaking up the warmth. After a good nap they play energetically by jumping, bucking and running around chasing one another with a flat horse toy in their mouth. It is good to be a horse at Crystal Peaks!

But it's not all fun and relaxation. This winter we have begun a new form of Equine Training and two days a week have been dedicated to working with all of our horses. Each staff member is assigned two horses, and is learning to train them. Troy and Kim use many combined methods of horsemanship that are primarily influenced by Tom and Bill Dorrance, Buck Branaman, and Clint Surplus. They have spent many hours observing and coaching the Crystal Peaks staff in the round pen and arena. A lifelong partnership is being established between the staff and horses that goes

far beyond a simple encounter between the two.

Instead of merely training our horses, we are working towards establishing three important things: trust, respect and understanding. Before coming to the ranch, many of our horses had been mishandled or even abused in training situations and were understandably cautious. A few, when confined to a round pen, frantically searched for a way of escape. Yet, love always proves what is true. Bit by bit, they began to genuinely show their desire to trust again. We have felt so honored

to stand quietly by, patiently encouraging each of them that they can return to trust.

After trust is established, it is important to earn the respect of our horses. We kindly and firmly show that we are in charge, allowing the horse to choose to give us his respect. The horse may choose his own way, but he will quickly learn that this always result in more work. Once respect is given, the horse learns that the best place to be is listening to the trainer that he trusts.

Understanding is crucial in our training because hundreds of precious children will be learning life lessons from them during this next season. Our ultimate goal is to have sensitive horses that will understand the slightest pressures from the little legs and hands that will soon be guiding them.

We as a staff have learned so many lessons while in the round pen. Just like we invite our horses to trust and submit, it is clear that God also waits for us to trust and submit. It is all too easy to frantically run in circles, ignoring His gentle whispers that call us to His side. But faithfully, patiently He waits, whispering "Trust me, child." We can find rest when we choose to stop running and turn and face our Lord.



HORSE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Our horses, with the majority of them coming from backgrounds of abuse and neglect, are the very core of what we do here at Crystal Peaks. These equines, once broken, lost and hurting, are now daily embraced by children who themselves have been through many similar circumstances. The victorious experiences of our horses give them the ability to reach out to kids in a unique way, making them what we lovingly refer to as our "equine counselors."

For the many horses who call this place home, Crystal Peaks offers a safe haven, a gentle hand and a life purpose. Our training and riding methods are based on the theories of natural horsemanship. This method utilizes quiet patience to communicate with horses in their own language. It is our highest goal to develop a trust relationship with each of these magnificent creatures.

Would you consider joining us in sponsoring one of our "equine counselors?" By simply choosing a sponsorship level, you can further ensure quality care to our "four legged staff" and help to continue a cost free opportunity to the children who call this Ranch their special place. Our horses would benefit in the following ways:

- ★ *Countless hours with one-on-one child and leader interaction*
- ★ *Daily engagement both physically and mentally*
- ★ *Lots of grooming, baths and carrots*
- ★ *Daily hay and grain as needed*
- ★ *Vitamins and supplements as needed*
- ★ *Regular preventative vaccinations and deworming*
- ★ *Professional farrier services of trimming and shoeing as needed*
- ★ *Tack and equipment replacement and repair*
- ★ *Contributions to the Equine Rehabilitation and Rescue Fund**

*The Equine Rehabilitation and Rescue Fund is an account that has been established to act as a medical "insurance fund" for the ranch horses. Its secondary purpose is to assist in the funding of horse rescues.

Thank you — our extended family — for your kindness, friendship and support. Each goes further than you know.



Please CHECK the program desired:

Range Boss
 \$200.00/month for 12 months
In participating as a Range Boss you will receive a:

- ★ 8 x 10 picture of your horse
- ★ Ranch jacket
- ★ Quarterly update on your horse

Herd Foreman
 \$100.00/month for 12 months
In participating as a Herd Foreman you will receive a:

- ★ 5 x 7 picture of your horse
- ★ Ranch t-shirt
- ★ Quarterly update on your horse

Cowboy
 \$50.00/month for 12 months
In participating as a Cowboy you will receive a:

- ★ 5 x 7 picture of your horse
- ★ Quarterly update on your horse

Sponsor(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

T-shirt or Carhart Jacket size _____

Method of Payment: _____ Checks _____ Cash
 _____ PayPal via our website

Signature of Sponsor _____ Date _____

CPYR Representative _____ Date _____

THANK YOU! In advance for supporting our ministry! Every level of sponsorship helps save horses and touch the lives of the Kids that visit the ranch.

From the Ranch Photo Album

OUR FENCES ARE REPAIRED THANKS TO THE SWAN BROTHERS!



COVEY IN TRAINING WITH TROY.



THE STAFF TAKES A BREAK TO PLAY IN THE SNOW!



ELLA & ALOHA



HANALEI



ANYTHING THAT LOOKS LIKE A TOY IS NEVER SAFE AROUND SHAMIS.

“A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal”

PROVERBS 12:10

REUNION, continued from page 1

Another remarkable moment... he too emulated the strength and character of Focus leadership. What a wonder to be surrounded by such warriors of the faith.

In the 2004 interview, Kim and Dr. Dobson shared together for approximately an hour and a half. This collective time translated into two separate broadcasts. After taping the second interview, we were all a bit shocked to turn around and see that the studio clock gave witness that THREE HOURS had passed. Together we laughed, cried, enjoyed special memories and our shared compassion for kids and horses. Kim, once again, was a captivating storyteller. It was a powerful and moving experience to hear her articulate what God is doing in such a simple place.

After the completion of the interview punctuated by hugs and photographs, Kim and I walked out of the main campus doors into the falling snow. What a mighty wonder... to reflect on how God can use two very simple people to help further His truth of healing, hope and purpose. Yes, this time... there were two. Moments before the interview was to start, I was invited by Dr. Dobson to come out of the sound room, pull a chair up to the microphone and join the conversation. What a joy it was to shoulder with Kim, for the first time, in a tandem radio venture.

Yes... “It does take a village.” Again, Focus on The Family has chosen to shoulder with us as we continue the work started so long ago. Ministry, as with life, involves all of us. We need each other. It is with deep gratitude that we thank them and together look forward to seeing what lays ‘just around the corner.’

P.S. What a poignant blessing! We have just learned that this interview will air on March 26th, 27th and 28th... Focus on The Family’s thirtieth anniversary.

Yes! I would like to help Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch fulfill their mission

Please use my donation for:

- Where it is needed most
- Endowment Fund
- For the children
- For the horses
- Ranch Equipment
- Staff education
- Volunteer program

Payment Method:

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

Credit cards are accepted at:

www.crystalpeaksyouthbranch.org

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

You can also make your donation at www.crystalpeaksyouthbranch.org

Our current wish list is also available at our website

Name _____

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City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail (please) _____

My Gift is _____ in honor of _____

My Gift is _____ in memory of _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail (please) _____

How LOW Can She Go?

Hannah has begun to make a reputation for herself on the ranch as the most flexible horse yet! She continually amazes us with her flexibility and muscle control! Hannah knows how to bow two different ways and she has maneuvered herself out of more than one precarious situation with her, what seems to be, elastic muscles! Her main motivation for these acrobatics is... you guessed it: CARROTS! Hannah is not shy about her love for treats and as you can see, will do just about anything for yummy snacks. She has become quite the personality

here on the ranch and all of her antics are humorous and entertaining to watch.



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