

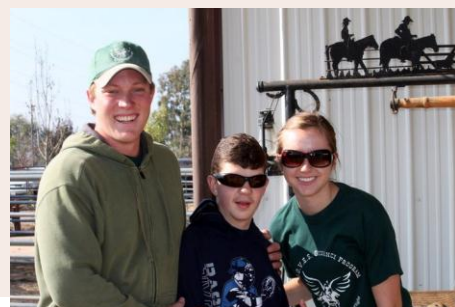
**Dates to Remember...  
Registration Begins:  
September 1, 2011**

**Fall Session is:  
October 5 thru November 17  
Call for more information:  
209-224-0311 or 209-329-7034**

See DOVES web site for details:  
[www.thedovesprogram.com](http://www.thedovesprogram.com)

DOVES email:  
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The DOVES Guidance Program

DOVES listed with  
Guidestar [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) ,  
A non-profit reporting resource.



“Where hooves and hearts take flight” is their motto and that is just what happened. It was April 2009 when our family first went to the Oxford Ranch. Our two children Zachary (then 11) and Kiley (8 yrs. old) were in awe with it all. We received a warm welcome from Gayle and her volunteers.

We had hoped and prayed for an opportunity for our kids to learn to ride horses. For Kiley it was a real confidence builder getting up on a horse. Zachary’s story is not as typical though. Because of Zachary’s seizures and developmental delay, he didn’t want anything to do with the horses. He really didn’t even want to pet a horse. Over time, patience and encouragement paid off for Gayle and the volunteers. We still recall the first time he got up on top of a horse. Nothing but smiles once in the saddle.

Now two years later, we are still going strong, and the D.O.V.E.S. Program is a major high light in our kids’ lives. Kiley has decided that horses are where it’s at, so now her room reflects that. It has been a big confidence builder for her. Learning to listen and trust the trainers has proven to be helpful as she continues to overcome fears. With so much excitement and satisfaction, she often reflects back on what her most recent accomplishment was.

Zachary has made great progress since he started. Not only is he riding and enjoying it, he is also being taught additional things. Steven and Jacob, two volunteers, have given extra effort in helping and teaching Zach. He is learning to get the tack out and put it back in its place when he is done. He feels very comfortable there thanks to the love and support he gets from the staff. The ranch is a place where Zach has developed his own sense of independence, not really needing mom or dad there by his side. So now we as parents get to sit back and watch with smiles as we see our kids “hearts take flight”. *By Steve Converse*

Summer  
2011

# DOVES Message

## A Dream Realized

By Gayle Oxford

The day finally arrived! It was a late spring day, and we woke up to a thick blanket of fog laying over the valley, not normal weather for June, and neither was the rain we had just days before! I was thankful for the unusually mild cool spring, I don’t like being away from the ranch when the Valley heats hits, and the forecast for the week was unexpectedly mild weather. We were heading for the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch’s Annual Information Clinic in Bend Oregon!

Shannon & I packed up the Navigator and drove the 10 miles to pick up our dear friend and board of director, Chris, who was going along with us. We were all excited about the trip! Shannon and I had wanted to attend the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch training clinic ever since we started our ministry, but the time and the money never seemed to come at the same time to make it possible. It was a dream of mine to attend the clinic some day and to meet Troy & Kim Meeder.

As we were heading out on Interstate 5 north towards Oregon, my thoughts drifted back to The DOVES 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary celebration at our ranch back on April 30<sup>th</sup>. It was so amazing that three years had already passed since I had read Kim Meader’s book, Hope Rising. The stories in this book planted a seed in my heart to follow in the Meader’s footsteps. I wanted to begin a ministry rescuing horses and helping at risk children find hope and acceptance, just as the Meeders were doing.

As I watched Mount Shasta through the front windshield grow taller and closer I reflected on how this, long desired trip, this dream, came about.

My daughter Bonnie Horn chaired our DOVES Guidance Program’s anniversary event. Family and friends joined in to help where needed. Bonnie had arranged for a blue grass jam session and we had a parade of our wonderful horses to meet and greet all that attended. The children played all day; Shannon gave farm wagon rides around the ranch, and my brother had set up a PA system to play music throughout the afternoon. The adults relaxed under the shade of the canopies watching all the activities, and all the while our horses watched the activity with as much interest. Visitors met our special horses and poured attention on them with pats, and scratching and hugs!

Bonnie tended the Bar-b-q, piling on the marinated chicken and roasting hot dogs. Doves participates all brought side dishes and you would have thought you were at your community Baptist Church’s Sunday afternoon potluck! In fact, a lot of the church attended! It was a great event!

Earlier in the day, as I told of their story and how they came to our ranch, our DOVES volunteers paraded our wonderful DOVES horses into the main arena. After the introduction of our horses I introduced our wonderful volunteer team. This was followed by a surprise from my daughter Bonnie, who unknown to Shannon and I had organized a donation to send us to CPYR Training Clinic. She presented a huge facsimile of a check, representing the amount of the donations received. We were so surprised! It was an amazing blessing to have so many people step up and donate to give us this wonderful opportunity! My daughters are amazing young women and have been so supportive of our ministry! I thank God each and every day for blessing me with such amazing daughters!

The evening came to a conclusion with a blue grass jam session, old folk songs, gospel music and our theme song; “On the wings of a snow white Dove” was sung. There was lots of good singing, poetry, fellowship and marshmallow roasting. I did not want the evening to end.

As I watch the snow capped Mt. Shasta raise up in front of me, I continued to savor those memories of that day, until my attention was brought back to the conversation Shannon and Chris were having. I joined in fun, of the good spirited bantering the three of us always enjoyed with each other. It was good to be sharing this adventure with my friend, whom I have known since 1974, a friend who believed in my vision and supported it since the beginning, and became our first DOVES volunteer and board of director.

Continued...

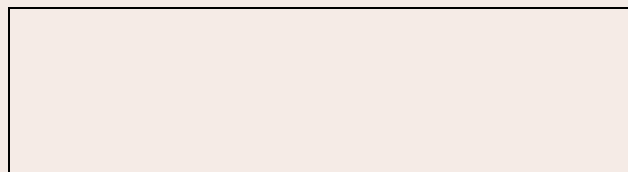


## D.O.V.E.S. SUMMER ISSUE 2011



**D.O.V.E.S**

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## A Dream Realized...continued...

As we continued up central California and headed northeast towards the Oregon border, we passed familiar landmarks that Shannon and I have traveled by on numerous occasions. I always enjoyed our trips to Ashland Oregon, where Shannon and I visited many times to attend stock dog trails at the Frey Ranch. But this trip took us up through Klamath Falls area that I had not seen in many years. The scenery, which we passed through, was breathtaking and it was like being in a candy store, you didn't know which way to look; for all the "eye candy"!

We pulled into Bend at about 6 PM on Tuesday evening and located our hotel. Once all our stuff was unloaded we headed out for dinner and to discuss the next days schedule. We did not have to be at the CPYR until 1 PM on Wednesday for check in and introductions. So we talked about what we would do with the extra time in the morning and decided to go "shopping"!

Wednesday morning we headed out to find some local tack stores and see some of the local sights, then after a quick lunch headed for the CPYR heading west toward the Three Sisters Mountain range in the distance. The area we were traveling through was beautiful! High desert plains with ponderosa pines and cedar trees everywhere accentuated by outcroppings of lava rocks and mountain sagebrush, was breathtaking! The ranches and homes in the area were attractive and neat, lots of horse ranches and hay farms. Green pastures held contented livestock, ponds and meandering creeks. This was truly "God's" country!

We turned off the main highway and down the road, which led to the Crystal Peaks Ranch. This was familiar to Shannon and I as we had made a visit to the ranch about a year before, just for a tour and to see the facility. However, Chris had not seen this area before, so as we were getting closer to the ranch entrance, I was giving her the tour guide. I explained, "Now over there is the hay farm where our donated hay from the CPYR ranch came from, and right there is the ranch they are considering to buy to add to what they already own, and right after this curve, is the ranch!"

As we pulled into the driveway entrance, a ranch volunteer who pointed us up the hill to a parking area greeted us. As we drove up through a gate another ranch volunteer greeted us and designated our parking spot. After we parked, we walked up the hill toward the ranch's main gathering area. A friendly ranch volunteer again greeted us; she pointed us to a check in area. There more smiling faces greeted us again and each one of us was handed a binder, a water bottle to be used the entire clinic and a name badge. We were then directed to an area where we were to have our photos taken for the directory we would receive at the end of the clinic. We were all very impressed by the professionalism yet the warm friendly welcomes all the 99 participate received! Chris and I just could not get over the attention to detail of the landscaping and "old west" look and theme of the facility. I was like being at Knot's Berry Farm! We kept telling Shannon, "We need to make this" or "we should do something like that!" at our ranch.

From the greeting, area we worked our way up to the "Red Rock Meeting Hall" Inside Troy Meeder was tuning up on his guitar along with one of the staff members. Troy tall and attractive was wearing a cowboy hat; he smiled a greeting at us as we found our seats. The orientation part of the seminar was kicked off with worship songs played on the guitar and led by Troy with staff member Marshall Teague accompanying and another staff member; I don't remember her name on keyboard. This was followed by Troy leading a prayer and then an introduction to the CPYR staff and the history of the ranch. Kim Meeder then took over on stage. Kim is a tall beautiful and slender woman with long dark hair and dark eyes and a smile that makes you feel like you've known her forever! Kim gave a very moving and emotional description of their "Cinder-ella" story of how the ranch came about. When Kim told the story of her tragic experience of losing both parents on the same day, there was not a dry eye in the meeting hall. Kim ended our time in the hall with prayer, and oh what a prayer warrior Kim is!

We then followed Kim out to meet the horses and take a tour of the ranch. Kim told of each horse's story of how they came to be at the ranch, some very moving and amazing. As Kim moved from one horse to the other, you could see her love and devotion to these "angels in horsehair", and you could see how the horses adored the attention from Kim! Many of these horses Kim has written about in her books and in the CPYR Newsletters. It was fun to realize you were actually meeting the horses you've read about!

The next three days of the clinic was filled with information, demonstrations, fellowship, prayer, worship music and incredible hospitality! Each night we returned to our motel room exhausted, yet energized and looking forward to the next day's activities!

I had the privilege of meeting Kim personally and having a warm moment with her. Kim is an incredibly passionate woman and you feel she truly cares about you. Both Kim and Troy are so generous in sharing their knowledge and resources to help others begin similar ministries. There is no arrogance, big egos or airs about this couple. They are truly motivated by God's love and their passion to do God's work and to share His blessings!

The three days of clinic ended with campfire fellowship, singing, and gifts from the staff and a belly filling tri tip dinner. Shannon, Chris and I were not only filled physically by all the good food; our hearts and spirit were filled by the love of the Meeders and all the staff at the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch!

Saturday morning we headed back home. As we traveled we discussed some of the things we had learned at the clinic and tossed around some ideas as we passed through the high plains of Oregon. Thoughts and ideas from the clinic were spinning in my head as we settled in for the long drive. Chris was reading one of Kim's books in the back seat of the Navigator and Shannon and I talked on about implementing many of the ideas we came away with from the clinic. It was a great experience; it was a time I will always remember, a dream come true, shared with my husband and best friend. A dream arranged by my daughters and made possible by the generosity of friends, family and DOVES participantes. I am so thankful for their support and love!

In reflection of our time at the clinic and what we learned, I must say that the one most important message from the Meeders was – If God gave you a dream... a vision for a ministry, go for it! He will take care of the details, start small and go slow, let God reveal to you His purpose for you! Have faith in God's calling and stay focused on the vision!

### Special Thanks To:

Bonnie Horn – for making our trip possible

Christy Dempewolf and family – for their support and encouragement through these growing years.

Steven & Jacob Horn – for taking care of the ranch while we were away on our "Dream" trip.

To all those that contributed to make our trip to the CPYR possible, I don't know who you all are, but know that Shannon, Chris and I are so grateful and thankful for you support and donation!

And to Troy & Kim Meeder for leading the way, for inspiring and helping others to help horses and children in need!



Proverbs 3:5-6  
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding  
In all your ways acknowledge  
Him and He will direct your paths"

