

Held at The Oxford Ranch - God, Family & Purpose

# The D.O.V.E.S. Guidance Program

Discovering Our Visions Through Equestrian Services - A Family & Youth Horsemanship Program

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3 NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: GAYLE OXFORD - NOV/DEC.2008

*“Our Mission is to give a special child, a special experience, a time and place to remember”*  
*With the use of equine & ranch activities along with family participation & support,*  
*It is our goal to help children of all ages & backgrounds to build trust, confidence & character.*  
*Encouraging each child to challenge themselves in ways that will develop them into caring & responsible adults.*

## *As we end our First Year.....We Count our blessings*

Looking back on our first year of the Doves Guidance Program, Shannon and I can say that the program is off and running and it has been blessed in so many ways!

We have met so many wonderful children and their families and are so blessed to be able to share our wonderful horses with them. We have witnessed many children go from apprehension to confidence and joy in riding and working with the horses.

We have seen our program kids make new friends within the group and have enjoyed watching them work together.

Our horses have been healthy and we have had some awesome folks step up and donate time, money and items for the program.

Most of all we thank God for guiding us on this journey and making the DOVES GUIDANCE PROGRAM a reality and a success!

*Merry Christmas & May God Bless  
You in the Coming New Year!  
Gayle & Shannon Oxford*



November 29, 2008 - Parade Practice & decorating day for the 2008 Lodi Parade of Lights. What a fun day!



### **“WE LOVE A PARADE!”**

Our first group participation was the 2008 Lodi Christmas Parade of Lights. This is a huge event, 77 entries and it's been estimated about 50 thousand spectators!

On November 29, 2008 we all got together for a day of decorating the wagon and the cart for the parade, and did some practice drives with Tony & Rosie.

We all had a great time, the wagonette and cart turned out beautifully with all the lights and garland. Everyone enjoyed the goodies that were brought to share.

December 4, 2008 was the night of the parade. The theme was “the songs of the season”. All the kids dressed in red tops and hats with lights all around! Tony and Rosie were all decked out in Christmas style and they were both high stepping! Tyler played his guitar from the front seat of the wagon as we marched along or rode in the wagon and cart. The crowds were amazing, sometimes 15 rows deep on the sidewalks, everyone waving and cheering us on! It was a great parade to get everyone into the Holiday spirit. When we got in front of the judges, Tyler with his guitar and Kaeli with her flute played jingle bells and we all sang along, at the end of the song we all yelled “Whoa!”

I think the judges liked us too, because out of about 11 equestrian entries we got 2nd place! We're all looking forward to next one!

## *We have a new horse for the program!*

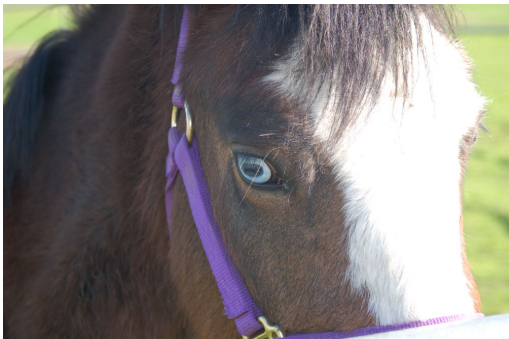
You know, sometimes things are just meant to be.....

My daughter Christy (you know the daughter that got us started back into horses with her "wishing") came a few weeks ago, the day after Thanksgiving to be exact, to have a mom and daughter day shopping (yes, we went out on "Black Friday") and just a fun day and break from being a mom. She spent the night, as the next day we were having the fun day with all the program kids decorating the wagon and cart for the parade. So, early that morning before all the activity, we went for a ride. When we got back, Christy said, "I wish I had a big ole lazy draft horse or draft cross for a riding horse!" So, I said lets get on line and take a look at what's on Dreamhorse.com, just for fun. Well, about the fourth ad down the page Christy notice this ad for a draft cross for \$1! Oh, wow! So just out of curiosity we checked it out. To make a long story short, this family in Sonora rescued this young draft cross colt from an auction last April, and nursed him back to health. But now they were moving and some of their horses could not go with them. They just wanted to give Merlin a good "forever home". When I told Alicia and Alex about our youth program they donated Merlin to us!

I made an appointment to go up and see him on that following Sunday. So off Shannon and I went to go meet Merlin!

He was so cute and friendly we just had to bring him home. Christy, quit wishing!

So Merlin is now part of the Doves Guidance program. He is a youngster, so he has a long way to go. All you kids will be able to help with his training and progress. He is going to be a big boy, as he is part draft horse. He looks just like the Budweiser Clydesdales! You all will have to come meet him soon. Below is just a peek at him, so come on by!



## Winter Schedule

We will be starting back with lessons on January 10th, weather permitting of course.

Please call to schedule your time. We will be doing lessons every Saturday through the winter, unless it gets too wet and muddy.

***REMEMBER THAT ALL LESSONS THROUGH WINTER ARE WEATHER PERMITTING, Please call if in doubt about conditions.***

## Help!

We need someone to volunteer their time and talent to set up and maintain an official web-site for the DOVES PROGRAM. Contact Gayle if you or someone you know has this ability.



### *Your Program. Your Horses!*

I have had several folks ask how they can contribute or help with expenses. Here are some suggestions:

Costco - The Modesto & Manteca Costco carry John Lyons Horse grain, while at Costco and if your budget can handle it, purchase a bag of grain for the horses, it's good for them and goes a long way.

A case of bottled water to contribute to the program for the kids and parents. We go through about a case of bottled water every week!

A bag of carrots or a bag of horse cookies for the horses. With all the kids enjoying giving the horses a treat, we go through a lot of carrots and cookies, much to the horses delight!

## **Who Can Benefit?**

Anyone! Children and families who have not had the opportunity to experience the country and ranch life. School & Church Groups for field trips. Parents that are considering a horse for their child, and want to know what the responsibility is in owning a horse. And, especially children or youths at risk, abused or troubled kids. A positive experience with a horse can build a child's confidence and trust. **Again, there is no charge or fees.** The time a child and family spend with a horse in a quite ranch atmosphere is priceless.

*Our horses benefit also, some came from situations of neglect and they love the*

**We still have a horses that need sponsors. If you know of anyone or business or group that would like to sponsor a horse for a year, please ask us for the Horse Sponsorship forms.**

## How to Help

Because we are a non profit program and do not charge a fee for the program lessons, all monies to support the horses maintenance & care, and to maintain a clean and safe facility, must come from donations or sponsors.

### Ways to Help:

- ✦ Donate money
- ✦ Donate tack or supplies
- ✦ Donate Feed and or services
- ✦ Help with fund raising
- ✦ Ask about sponsoring a horse
- ✦ Volunteer or Mentor

Most donations are tax deductible and donated money goes into the general fund, unless otherwise specified.

*I know we are all in "tight times" right now, so getting donations can be difficult, the cost of everything is going up, especially the cost of feeding a horse!. But, you or someone you know may be able to "donate" time and or services. Also, taking our brochure and donation forms to local businesses to ask for donations or items of use is another way to contribute. Pass the word about our program and what it has done for your family!*

## Spring 2009

Mark your calendars for April 25th, 2009

This the date we will celebrate the first year of the DOVES Guidance Program.

Activities will include a bar-b-q, carriage rides, wagon rides along with riding and grooming demos from our program kids. A raffle and a tack/ rummage sale to raise money for the program. We also need to start a horse sponsorship drive to help support the maintenance of the program horses.

Please set this date aside.

Invitations will be made so that you can invite friends and family and businesses to help promote awareness for our program. Please collect items for the raffle, ask your local feed stores or other businesses for donations. We will need everyone's help and participation for this event as proceeds will help to keep the DOVES going and growing. Please let me know if you have any ideas or suggestions. More details later.

### THANK YOU!

Rita Brown - Saddle & tack  
Virginia Lewis - Saddle & tack  
Dyanne Vargas - More Boots!

## What's in a Name?

As our idea for The Family and Youth Horsemanship Program was forming, we realized that we really needed a shorter more attention catching name.

The D.O.V.E.S - Discovering Our Visions through Equestrian Services was a acronym we came up with, as we wanted to call our volunteer helpers -Doves, reflecting a doves gentle and kind nature. And, the dove is a symbol for the Holy Spirit, which we believe is leading this vision.

When the two doves appeared in my yard, we had already been using The Family & Youth Horsemanship Program at The Oxford Ranch, but were still searching for just the right name for the program, so after the "dove" sighting we realized we had to use the word "doves" somehow in the name, hence:  
The D.O.V.E.S. Guidance Program at Oxford Ranch.

While this program is a separate entity from the Oxford Ranch, the ranch will be considered the home and address of the program.



## Our Needs List

- \* Building materials for restroom & office or portable office unit
- \* Concrete foundation & labor for the donated barn (when completed, we will be able to take in 5 more horses for the program
- \* Tractor & Implements
- \* Arena Panels, Sand fill for rd/pen
- \* Hay
- \* Helmets \* Kids size cowboy boots

## Our Wish List

- \* Manure spreader
- \* A older gentle gelding
- \* A older gentle pony or mini
- \* Kid's saddles
- \* grooming tools
- \* volunteers & mentors
- \* Web site and web site master
- \* Feeders, hanging or standing hay feeders.

# Holiday Fun!



*November 29th - Oh what fun it is to decorate the wagon and cart! Best of all was the wagon rides & cookies!*



*December 4, 2008 - The Lodi Christmas Parade of Lights  
The Doves Guidance Program - Won 2nd place!*



*Lots of excitement while getting ready to start the parade*



*Waiting for the parade to start*



*Rosey waiting to get hitched*



*The Zunia Family  
Vincent, Vinessa, Victoria & Destiney*



*Claire, Christina, Desi & Victoria*



*Gayle, Rosey & Christy*

*Parade photos compliments of  
Monica & Steve Law*



# Reminders



**Remember that our next Saturday will be January 10th for lessons (weather permitting).**

**Please call sometime between now and the 10th to schedule your lessons.**

**January 10th we will also start cleaning and oiling saddles & tack, so if you can plan to stay longer on that day to help out with that, let me know.**

**We also have a horse video to share with you kids.**

## How to Dress for Horse Play in the Winter!

Please dress appropriately for the winter weather.

When you come out to the ranch it is a good idea to dress in "layers"

Turtle neck or faunal shirt, with a sweat shirt or sweater over the top, thermals on your legs work well to keep you warm while on the horse.

You can always take off a sweater or coat if you get too warm.



*Tips for a fun session at the ranch:*

- \* Be on time.
- \* Come prepared, sunscreen, insect repellent, bottled water and a snack.
- \* Bring a camera, take photos of your child to share with them & family.
- \* Help out where you can, sweeping raking and poop scooping!

## A Special Thanks to Our Donors, Volunteers & Contributors!

**Alex & Alicia Encoyand** - Donated a horse for the program! **THANK YOU!**

**Bob Ewing** - Horse Sponsor For one year!

**Virginia Lewis** - Horse Sponsor for a year! Saddle & Tack

**Judith Buethe Communication** - Horse Sponsor for one year!

**Anna Charlesworth** - Donation & Horse sponsor for a year!

**Steve Law** - Donation

**Monica Law** - Cookies & fruit!

**Kris Martinson** - English Saddle

**Chris Patterson** - Volunteer, boots, hat

*Our biggest expense for the DOVES Program is feeding the horses that are used in the program. Hay & grain prices have sky rocketed! If you know of any organization or individual who would like to donate feed or money or sponsor a horse please let us know!*

**Denise Nelson** - Pony use for home school day

**Christy Dempewolf** - Volunteer and co-ordinator for Home School Field Trips & "Proof reader".

**Lockeford Hay Station** - Discount on riding helmets.

**Kerry Gee** - Donation

**Dyanne Vargas** - Volunteer & Boots

**LaVonne Young** - Donation

**Calif/Nev. Moose Association** - Donation

When making a donation by check, please make payable to:

**The DOVES Program**

*The D.O.V.E.S. Guidance Program  
at  
Oxford Ranch*

13749 E. Kettleman Lane  
Lodi, Ca. 95240



THE D.O.V.E.S.

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**

*We want to extend our sincere appreciation to all those that have*

*donated, contributed and supported*

*The D.O.V.E.S. Guidance Program*

*From our Heart to You!*

*Shannon & Gayle Oxford*

