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TBR News & Notes

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from the Saddle

by Scott Chandler, Director

Happy New Year!

With a new year usually comes new year's resolutions: losing weight, quitting smoking and reducing alcohol consumption are usually the favorites. So as not to break with tradition, I wanted to take this one time of year that people try to make changes and suggest something deeper than a gym membership.

Don't get me wrong. Getting the body back to that high school playing weight can be good for you. I have found, though, most of us have a really hard time seeing true character flaws in ourselves. My late grandpa used to tell me that "the biggest lies we tell are to ourselves." When we really want something or don't want to have to recognize a negative behavior, we can find many ways to rationalize or justify our



The Tierra Blanca Ranch youth gather for a group photo after a long and successful day of dehorning and branding the ranch cattle.

behavior. Have you noticed how easy it is to see and point out the shortcomings and flaws in a co-worker? Maybe that's why we have Matthew 7:3: "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?"

This is something we are always trying to teach the kids: if you really want to be successful, you must get your "demons" out in front of you where you can see them. Look for red flags that lead up to a bad behavior, so you can make a conscious decision to alter the

course of your normally bad choice.

So what I am really suggesting is as the new year brings new year's resolutions, make another new one to honestly look at yourself. Remember the biggest lies we tell are to ourselves, so be brutally truthful with yourself. As I tell the kids, none of us is perfect; we all fail. But we must strive for that perfection and challenge ourselves, or we fall in a stale rut. Make some hard changes this year; if you don't, next year they will be even harder to change. God Bless and Happy New Year.

Creek Ranch Highlights

December was a festive month at the creek ranch. The girls set up and decorated three Christmas trees throughout the house to bring in some holiday cheer. They were constantly fine-tuning their baking skills - filling the house with Christmas treats that were quickly inhaled by whomever happened to wander in. A pre-Christmas snow prompted a sledding party that lasted until the snow melted away in the sunshine.

Despite the holiday, the month wasn't all play. Supervised by staffmember

Emily Campbell, the girls helped cut posts and rails for a fencing project and now are digging the post holes necessary to raise the fence. They also participated in the welding lessons with Chris Dennison and used their new skills for another pipe fencing project.

Besides all the building projects, the boys and girls

hauled around a thousand bales of hay in December for the cattle and horses.



Taking her turn, Kaitlyn dehorn a cow. Both the boys and girls participate with branding and dehorning the cattle. (state law requires branding)

Highlights from the Boys Lodge Group Activities

Despite December being a holiday month, the boys at TBR were busy learning practical skills between the festivities.

In the spirit of a new year, they did a little sprucing of their ranch home by installing new carpet.

Down at the Tierra Blanca Creek Ranch, they helped Scott Chandler with branding the ranch's cattle. Due to the many storms that rolled through, our cattle were battling pneumonia and other bad weather related sickness. So Dustin and the boys spent many hours doctoring cattle while enduring extremely cold and wet conditions. Due to their efforts, losses were minimized, and the cattle are healthy



The boys practice their welding skills.

and growing. Since the cattle require some additional fencing, staffmember Chris Dennison took the opportunity to teach welding basics necessary for building the rail fencing. Staffmember and resident mechanic, John Wills enlisted in the boys help as well for ranch vehicle maintenance.

December was a month of celebration - of course because of the holiday season but also because a number of boys and girls made the A-B Honor Roll.

Hatch First Baptist Church opened its doors to the ranch for a Christmas party. The church provided all the food, and the TBR kids gathered with their families to enjoy fellowship, games and of course the delicious food. On Christmas Eve, they travelled to the Hillsbro Community Church for a Christmas singalong.

On New Years Eve, both camps gathered at the Creek Ranch house for a night of more food, games and festivities. On a dare, a group of boys dunked their heads in the frigid creek to prove that they could...and live to tell the tale. But Emily says the highlight of all the holiday events was a Scrabble triumph of she and Ethan over the reigning Scrabble queen - Colette Chandler.

Snapshots from 2009

a view from our window



summer swinging



working cattle



4th of July celebration



Easter egg hunting



branding the ZX



Toss No Mas



fall days at the ranch



the boys break from branding



pirates, football stars and angels



searching for cattle on the TBR



weight lifting: loading hay



TBR kids, their families and staff gathered for a night of games and food at Hatch First Baptist Church.

Thank You's

To Rich and Cheri Williamson

Thank you for your donation of a saddle to the TBR program.

To Marcie Brown

Thank you for donating both a rocking chair and a stereo sound system to our program.

To Sheryl Baker and Family

Our condolences on Ryan's passing. Thank you to those who contributed to TBR in his memory.

To Hatch First Baptist Church

Thank you for another great weekend of meals for TBR parents.