



RANCH LIFE

Summer 2008 Issue

Our Kids Are College Bound

When the journey begins, a destination is likely in mind. The route may be apparent, sometimes not. Travel times may be known, sometimes not. But we know where we want to go. This season, with great joy and a strong sense of accomplishment, three of our precious young men have arrived at the destination for which they had set out. Kevin Armour, Eddie Castillo, and Joseph Sims have earned and received high school diplomas and certifications, destinations they had established in their respective journeys at the Goshen Valley Boys Ranch. Through the love of our Heavenly Father and with the help of many, these young men stayed the course. House parents and their families who prayed with them, counselors who navigated with them, teachers whose boundless patience nurtured them, and staff who exulted with them in their accomplishments, have kept lamps lit on the journey. Michael and Linda Creighton, who serve the Ranch as house parents for the Covenant House, home to our graduating class, Stacy Sabaka, Clinical Services Director, and Craig Bridges, Residential Director, stand out as disciples who walked these steps with our boys.

These young men, our first Goshen Valley Boys Ranch graduating class, have bright futures with many options. Following his second summer serving as Counselor at Cherokee Outdoor YMCA, Kevin is headed to Atlanta Christian College, pursuing a career in Early Childhood Education. Eddie is headed to Valdosta State University, where he hopes to join the track team this fall. Joe is enrolled at Appalachian Technical College, where he hopes to pursue a career in criminal justice. It is of note that these young men have secured scholarships and grants that make these college opportunities possible.

We will miss these young men greatly as they find their way forward. Their legacy is the hope and encouragement that is left behind for the boys who continue their journey on the Ranch. Optimism, opportunity, empowerment, and the love of God is the currency of the Ranch. We have been blessed to see the love of our Lord come alive in these young men and we pray for them ceaselessly...

Our very best wishes,
John, Connie and Zach

Left back: Zach Blend, John Blend, Eddie Castillo, Kevin Armour, and Connie Blend.
Front: Joseph Sims



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“...uncommon kindness
brings uncommon
good....”

The Covenant House, A Special Place For Special Kids

The Covenant House, our home and the home to our Independent Living Program at the Goshen Valley Boys Ranch, was established to create an environment in which our older boys on the Ranch might be exposed to opportunities that would prepare them for adulthood. Our program is built on the four core values of the Goshen Valley Boys Ranch; Faith, Family, Education and Work. We also focus on Life Skills that will enable these kids to become all that God has created them to be.

The young men of the Covenant House are given the opportunity to find employment, obtain their driver's license, graduate from high school or obtain a GED, take a friend to the Prom, and assist in setting long-term career goals. We visit colleges, prepare for SAT and ACT tests, volunteer in church and community activities, and learn to manage money. Along with our

counseling colleagues, we work to explore with our kids the basic life skills needed to insure they will be prepared to face the world when they are ready to leave the Ranch.

As a family, we attend church together, work out at the YMCA, and eat meals together. The kids have part time jobs in town and take advantage of extra curricular activities. We enjoy hiking and fishing, hold weekly family meetings, where we work through issues. We look to grow through the problems we face, learning to make good choices along the way. Our family is blessed with the love of God and with the underlying basis of becoming all that God has created each of us to be.

Mike and Linda Creighton

House Parents



Left to Right: Joe Sims, Eddie Castillo, Linda Creighton, Mike Creighton and Kevin Armour

Graduates at the Goshen Valley Pavilion Ceremony .



Eddie shares his story.



Joe and his graduation cake.

Darby Sweet Darby!!!!

Darby is the newest addition to the Ranch family; she was two months old on June 2nd. Unfortunately her mother was unable to nurse her. She is currently being bottle-fed and cared for by the entire Ranch. It has been a delight to see God's creation at work. Caring for this baby is a true blessing to us.



Summer Academy Is Five Years Old And Kicking



Summer 2008 is here and what a summer it will be. We're starting off with a wonderful trip to the Garden City Retreat Center for a week of fun and renewal on the beach, returning to the Ranch for the start of our 5th Summer Academy. Summer is filled with activities for the boys from field trips to the Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta Braves games and service projects throughout Waleska and Canton, with lots of fun activities in between.

In June, after returning from the beach, we will invest the first weeks in educational enrichment, with an emphasis on

remedial skills. After education and counseling time, the boys look forward to days filled with activities, including swimming, baseball, fishing, horseback riding, YMCA camp, Six Flags, boating on Carter's lake and other local and Ranch based opportunities. We start out each day with Pavilion Time at 10:00am, a opportunity for morning devotion and sharing. After the sharing of God's word and talking about how it touches our lives, the boys break into activities such as tutoring, counseling, and team building. After an action filled morning, we meet back at the pavilion for some lunch and kick it in for the home stretch of afternoon fun.

We are blessed to be able to provide a full array of opportunities for our boys. We seek to provide experiences that

will last a lifetime and possibly be life changing as well. It is a privilege for the staff to watch a child's face as he gazes at the ocean for the first time or to look into eyes filled with joy as he catches his first fish. Providing our young men these awesome opportunities is a true privilege and honor. Should you have an interest in helping to make the Summer Academy a reality, please join us as a monthly supporter to our Summer Academy fund . You can play a crucial part by helping our young men live out these experiences. Your support and partnership is vitally important. Thank you for all you do and have a great summer!

*Blessings,
Craig Bridges
Residential Director*

Ranch Heads To Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

As the school year ends and the summer begins the Goshen Valley Boys Ranch prepares for its annual vacation to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Each of the boys and entire staff will be spending the week at Garden City Chapel Christian Retreat Center. The Garden City Chapel is located within walking distance of the Atlantic Ocean, allowing some of the boys their first beach experience. The Garden City Chapel has adopted Goshen Valley and sponsors our room and board as well as providing tickets for the group to the

local amusement parks and Carolina Opry. This is a week of fun and fellowship for all who attend and a blessing from those who make it possible.



Boys at the Beach

Third Quarter School Result Breaks All Records

It has been an incredible 3rd quarter of school. As a Ranch we carried a 2.9 Grade Point Average (GPA) with 19 boys reporting. If you add the house parents' children: Jillian, Dylan and Matt S. the GPA is 3.0. That is spectacular!!!!

We had one student, **Jordin** receive a **4.0** GPA and he was named the Top Student at the Ranch!!

Good Shepherd Home was the top home for the 3rd quarter with a 2.8 GPA.

Thank you, our most beloved house parents, staff and tutors for all your efforts to help these boys value education and enjoy success. WOW!

*Craig Bridges,
Residential Director*



*Don & Terry Frazee
Good Shepherd Home*

Rome Braves

A big thank you to Steve Garrison and family of Canton Tire and Wheel for a great night out to the Rome Braves baseball game. On April 5th the ranch set out with Steve to watch some great minor league baseball. On the way we marched into the Wendy's and slammed some square burgers. Man can those boys eat. After a full meal and then some, we made our way to the old ball park where we got to watch not one but two ball games. The boys were scampering around chasing foul balls, meeting new people (girls) and just have having fun. Even though the Braves came up short the boys at Goshen Valley had a winning time thanks to Steve Garrison and Canton Tire and Wheel for blessing us with a great night of baseball, snacks and community. Thanks Steve!





Construction Abounds On The Ranch

As you drive down Goshen Trail this year, you will likely see construction going on in many directions. We are presently finishing the restoration of the oldest Ranch structure and will soon be dedicating it anew as the Goshen Valley Welcome Center. Built over 150 years ago, the Welcome Center will house our Development Office, as well as provide needed visitation facilities.

Across Goshen Way, we are now designing our Alumni House, which will provide a place for our college bound kids to call home when they are back on the Ranch for holidays and vacations. The Alumni House will also provide needed short term housing for Ranch guests, interns, and as well as much needed counseling and family visitation settings. We hope to have this finished by Thanksgiving of this year.

Finally, a little way up Goshen Trail, you will find us working on plans for the Education House addition to our administrative and counseling office. This important addition will provide tutoring and classrooms settings that are much needed.

Please consider a gift to these worthwhile and important additions to our Ranch program. Should you have an interest in our capital development, or might be interested in finding a family name for these buildings, please call John Blend at the Ranch office (770.796.4618) for more information...



Demolition under way at the old homestead.



Our new welcome center finished in July.

Goshen Valley Classic Tees Off At Cherokee This Fall



Cherokee Country Club Entrance

Please mark your calendar, Monday October 13th for the 3rd annual Goshen Valley Classic Charity Golf Tournament, the primary fundraising event each year for the Boys Ranch. The event has grown each year, and this year will be moving to a spectacular new venue at the **Cherokee Town and Country Club**. Cherokee is recognized as perhaps the finest golfing experience in Atlanta.

As a player or sponsor, fully both, you will have a lutely delightful time with and clients, while making a tant contribution to the



and hope- an abso- colleagues an impor- kids who

call the Goshen Valley Boys Ranch home. In years past, your generous support for the Golf Classic has provided the resources for the construction of our Community Pavilion, the paving of Goshen Valley Trail, and the establishment of our award winning Independent Living Program. Please Contact Zach Blend at: Zachblend@aol.com or visit www.goshenvalleclassic.org .