

TOP TRAIL PICKS OF
THE TRAILMEISTER

FACEBOOK POSTS
FROM OUR READERS

GAIT-WAYS TO
GREAT GETAWAYS

trailblazer

SEPTEMBER 2013 \$6.95

MODERN HORSEMAN

Teaching Speed Control
On The Trail

Is Your Horse

HARD TO CATCH?

Build A Better

GAITED HORSE TRAIL RIDING COMPANION

STRESS:

THE HIDDEN LINK

To Equine Digestive
Disorders

JOINT SUPPLEMENTS:

DO THEY REALLY HELP?

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS SERVING THE
RECREATIONAL & COMPETITION TRAIL RIDER

CRYSTAL PEAKS YOUTH RANCH SHINES A LIGHT
UPON HORSES AND YOUNG LIVES

“Together They Heal Each Other”

BY DUTCH HENRY



Sessions at CPYR center around the needs of the children and the relationship between mentor and child. Photo by Red Owl Photography

The four pillars of Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch are Rescue, Mentor, Hope and Empower. Since Kim and Troy Meeder founded Crystal Peaks in 1995, tens of thousands of young lives have been touched and changed by the gentle ministry at the tiny ranch in Oregon. With the help of rescued horses, kind hearts of volunteers and a steadfast belief in God’s love, the thousands of youths who visit the ranch each year experience one-on-one sessions at no charge. Their only commitment is that they want to be there.

The first pillar, *Rescue*, embraces the fact that Crystal Peaks was founded in part as a rescue and rehabilitation facility for equines. Over 300 horses have been given a new start on life here. They come from all different circumstances ranging from abuse, starvation and neglect and yet these horses offer healing from the day they arrive. Youngsters and their families enjoy abundant healing as they are led by horses who are charting their own path on the road to recovery. Together they heal each other.

Mentor, the second pillar, focuses on the uniqueness of each child, pairing each child with one horse and one leader. In this way, each session can be tailored to the individual youth in selecting the games and activities most beneficial to the child. This careful pairing allows the mentor to share in the individual needs and desires of the child. Sometimes it's fun and games. Sometimes just talking. Sometimes simply crying together.

Hope for the family is pillar three. Crystal Peaks is dedicated to bringing families back together, for Kim and Troy understand that challenges and burdens are made lighter when the family is together and strong. Throughout the year they offer many events for family participation, and while they vary from season to season, they are always centered on family fun and learning together. Families are always encouraged to visit, watch and cheer as youngsters participate in mentor sessions.

Empower, the fourth pillar, is an outreach program helping others who are of like mind and want to help youths and families heal, grow and strengthen. Since 2006, Crystal Peaks has hosted information clinics to help folks start similar ministries. To date over 180 new ranch ministries have started with the help and guidance of Crystal Peaks all across the US and worldwide.

A TESTAMENT TO RECOVERY

The tiny ranch near Bend, Oregon itself stands as a testament to recovery. When Kim and Troy set out to create a healing place, the only land they could afford was the nine-acre remains of a stripped out cinder mine. For two years, they hauled in moldy hay, stall cleanings, manure and other natural materials that would breathe new life into the devastated land. Eventually the land responded and, like the lives that are healed there, bounced back to life. Today, while some of the scars remain, the new happy shining face of the land welcomes horses, children and families to heal together in a spiritual environment.

When Kim brought home the first two rescue horses and began to heal them in 1995, it wasn't long before a few children wandered in, offer-



Teaching other ranches to duplicate what they do. Photo by Benjamin Edwards Photography

ing to help the starved and beaten horses. Kim watched as the children bonded with the horses. How the horses strengthened them. It reminded her of how her own horse had sheltered her in her youth after a devastating family tragedy. Watching the youngest of the children, who had never spoken, begin to talk to the horses, the stage was set.

Together with her husband Troy, a few horses and a strong belief in God's guidance, they would build a place where hearts, bodies and spirits could heal. Not just horses, but children too. Kim and Troy feared that today children are losing touch with the real world, the natural world, as they are consumed by video games, TV and movies, and the fantasy world that exists there, offering almost nothing that could anchor them. Hands-on interaction with horses on the ranch would offer that anchor and put them in touch with the real natural world.

From the beginning, families found them, bringing their children to discover new directions. Soon every school counselor in the three surrounding counties recommended them. More and more children walked up the long driveway from the greeting center to the corrals and barns where healing and magic happen. Today even the local Judges in juvenile court recommend and send children to Crystal Peaks, understanding that the program works.

Over 5,000 visitors a year come for healing. That number includes all family members and that's important, for one of the pillars at Crystal Peaks is strengthening the family. Sessions vary from one-time visits to children being involved with the ranch for years, and everything in between. Seventy percent come more than once. Most of the youths come often, come for years, as often as they can be fit into the program. The staff is allowed to set up 40 percent of their sessions for youths they want to mentor, who need the time and continued guidance.

The tiny ranch near Bend, Oregon itself stands as a testament to recovery. When Kim and Troy set out to create a healing place, the only land they could afford was the nine-acre remains of a stripped out cinder mine. For two years, they hauled in moldy hay, stall cleanings, manure and other natural materials that would breathe new life into the devastated land. Eventually the land responded and, like the lives that are healed there, bounced back to life.

continued next page

Things changed in a grand way in 2004 when Kim published her first book, "Hope Rising," and Kim and Troy had their first interview with the founder of Focus on the Family, Dr. James Dobson, on his worldwide radio show, Family Talk. Family Talk is heard in 275 countries with 40 million listeners daily.

Crystal Peaks was built by very willing hands and hearts, such as their local part time volunteers who come out faithfully once a week to generously give their time. Photo by Red Owl Photography



"HOPE RISING"

Things changed in a grand way in 2004 when Kim published her first book, "Hope Rising," and Kim and Troy had their first interview with the founder of Focus on the Family, Dr. James Dobson, on his worldwide radio show, Family Talk. Family Talk is heard in 275 countries with 40 million listeners daily.

Suddenly people far and wide began contacting them, explaining how they've always wanted to do something like Crystal Peaks to help horses and children. Knowing that God was leading the way, in 2006 they held their first Empowerment clinic, a four-day clinic teaching what they had learned about starting and running a faith-based healing center. Kim and Troy thought that clinic would be a one-time thing. Shocked by the demand, they have held two clinics a year ever since, and over 2,000 people have attended.

The Empowerment clinics help folks create similar ministries of their own to help young folks find firm footing. There are currently 156 similar ministries throughout the US and internationally, including Australia, Canada, England, Honduras, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Romania and Slovakia. Crystal Peaks continues to receive applications from new locations each month.

Troy also spends a great deal of time travel-

ing, helping folks set up their own ministries. Advice and guidance is available for anyone who feels the calling to open a ministry of their own.

Kids are being touched all over the world because of a little thing God did in central Oregon. Thank you Kim and Troy for hearing that message and carrying forward the healing for children, families and horses.

To learn more about CPYR, or to inquire about starting a healing place, visit their website www.crystalpeaksyouthranch.org



Dutch Henry is a novelist and writer who writes about "People & Horses Helping Horses & People" and resides in Virginia with his wife of 36 years,

Robin; along with one horse, dogs, cats and chickens. Dutch also does free "Therapy For Therapy Horse Clinics" at therapeutic riding centers across the country to help horses maintain proper posture, free-and-easy movement and body carriage. You can reach Dutch at dutchhenry@hughes.net He would love to hear from you. Join his blog at, <http://dutchhenry.blogspot.com> His novel "We'll Have the Summer," is available on Amazon and Dutch's website www.dutchhenryauthor.com

Troy and Kim Meeder, cofounders of Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch.

