

## Agape Youth Ministry's **PROGRESS REPORT**

Summer 2011

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### 2011 Summer Camps at Agape Youth Ranch



AGAPE YOUTH RANCH was buzzing with lots of kids & fun during this summer's camps. We held 3 week-long camp programs (1st for ages 8 - 10; 2<sup>nd</sup> for ages 11-13, and the 3rd for ages 14 -16), as well as one 4-week program. This year, we were able to hold a 4-day staff training week before camps began. This was helpful to everyone, as well as being a lot of fun.

Our week-long camps followed our normal program, which is all-out wild and crazy fun and action for everyone!!! Of course we mix in lots of really awesome chapel services and devotional times too!! The month-long program is a little mellower, with an emphasis on building relationships with each of the teens in our care. During the month-long program, the teens get to work with horses, dogs, and animals, just as they do in the week-long programs. However, with the extended time, we have the opportunity to teach more advanced skills.

This year was really special, as we had two teens accept Christ as their Savior!!! This is such a thrill for us and makes our work here very fulfilling. It makes all of the struggles we sometimes face seem worthwhile! At the end of the day, that is why Agape Youth Ranch exists - for the purpose of helping teens to come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

As always, we are so thankful to all our staff and volunteers who make all of this possible. I believe we had one of the best Summer Staffs ever this year, and believe me, that made a huge difference! So, THANK YOU, to all who had a part in making this a great summer!!!!

*Dan & Kristel Callister*, Ranch Foreman

**From BREE ANNE HONIG, AYR's Canine Trainer / Ranch Assistant and Summer Camp Counselor:**

It has been quite an amazing summer! It's hard to put 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  weeks of nonstop activity into words, but here are some of the highlights.

This summer, we had the same staff members stay throughout the whole summer. All the staff attended a 4 day training session that included games and some special fellowship time. It was a blast and definitely helped our summer run smoother. We were blessed with 5 dedicated summer staffers, as well as many other volunteers. "Thank you" to everyone who helped in making this summer great!



The 1<sup>st</sup> camp was filled with games, horseback riding, vaulting, mind-building activities, a hike, and lots of great food. We had 10 enthusiastic campers who like to make lots of noise & have a fun time. The theme for this week was the Ten Commandments. At the end of the week, each camper had successfully memorized all 10, as well as the song that went with it.





The 2<sup>nd</sup> camp was a good group of 11 campers, most of whom had been here in past summer camps. I asked them what their favorite year of camp had been, and got an over-whelming consensus that this year had topped the charts! Credit was given to the best camp food ever, fun games, and lots of friends. Each week of camp included "Wacky Wednesday" where campers go on a morning hike, have a cool, refreshing afternoon of water games, & concluded with root beer floats and a movie. The favorite games throughout the week included "banana-eating caterpillars" and "bucket roulette."

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> camp had a total of 7 campers - an easy number to work with. Drill Team on horseback was a new activity that met with lots of success & enthusiasm. Other new activities included a professional cowboy demonstrating ranch cattle work; and a presentation by Game & Fish on various snakes they brought to show, as well as the remains of others, and then held interactive discussion. The week wrapped up with the rodeo featuring cattle round-up, barrel racing, vaulting, pick-up men, and a rodeo clown (me!). It was a fun way to end a successful summer.



The "Summer at the Ranch" 4-week program is my favorite because it is similar to the actual residential program that will be held for at-risk teens in the near future. This summer, I got to be a bunkhouse counselor, which was the highlight of my summer. I had 2 great campers whom I got to know well throughout the 4 weeks they were here. One girl has been at AYR every summer & it was neat to see her continue to grow in her faith. My other camper was new this year and was sent here as "punishment" for the trouble she had gotten into with the law. It wasn't long before she began to realize this was the best summer she had ever had, as she made the decision to accept Jesus' free gift of salvation and to devote her life to Christ. It always humbles me to realize how the Lord chooses to use me in His work and to be able to witness the miracles He does. In addition to the 2 girls I mentored, there were five boys in the Summer at the Ranch program, one of which also gave his life to the Lord this summer. All the summer staff at AYR felt this was the best and most blessed of all our summer camps so far. Thank you for your continued prayers for all of us here at AYR!

## **MEMO from the CEO**

To all the volunteer staff who helped with the summer camps in June & July, the AYM Board of Directors and I ðThank you, and pray that God blesses you for your service.ö

This summer, we gave several scholarships to the camps because of the economy, so we are thankful for all of our financial supporters. They have been used by our loving God to make it possible for many kids to experience the fellowship and adventures in our summer camps, and to give our staff the opportunity to work with each of them.

In Matthew 19:14, we read where Jesus said, ð**Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.**ö During this year's summer camps, there were two teenagers who accepted Jesus Christ into their lives. This makes all our efforts more than worthwhile.

This fall, we are starting a new Weekend Mentorship Program for teens, which will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> weekends of September, October, and November at the Agape Youth Ranch. The teens who enroll for the program will arrive at the Ranch on Friday evenings and stay through to Sunday afternoon. We have tried to keep the cost as reasonable as possible. Arrangements for transportation from the Phoenix metro area can be made at an additional cost. If you have a teen or know of a teen who could use some time away in a Christian environment, please enroll them soon, as space is limited. Further information is available on our website, where you can also register online. Go to [www.agapeyouth.org](http://www.agapeyouth.org).

A hearty ðWelcomeö to Larry and Crystal Hughes, who have been serving at the Ranch for the past 6 weeks. Crystal is our new Ranch Hostess and Food Service Manager. If you are thinking of coming to Agape Youth Ranch, please contact Crystal at the Ranch phone number: (520) 824-2239. Crystal brings a big smile, a joyful attitude, and wonderful abilities in serving the Lord at the Ranch.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!** We need helpers with upcoming fundraisers, as well as ðwork weekendö volunteers at the Ranch. If you are able to donate some time and help, please contact us at our e-mail address: [agapeyouth@agapeyouth.org](mailto:agapeyouth@agapeyouth.org). (Please give us a phone number where we can easily reach you.)

May God bless you,

*Gordy Lange*  
CEO/Director AYM