

Down Home Ranch, 20250 FM 619, Elgin TX 78621 (512) 856-2246 and 856-0128

UPDATE

from
Down Home Ranch

March 1997

HELP! Greenhouses Are Arriving!

Truckloads of greenhouse parts have begun arriving at the Ranch. Assembled, they will form four complete, fully equipped Nexus greenhouses and give Down Home Ranch over 12,000 sq. ft. of growing space.

Donated by an Abilene businessman, Joe Matthews, the greenhouses are a dream come true—especially once they are erected.

We will need all hands on deck to get the job done. Charlie Stockton of Stockton Builders in Austin has been working on a plan for the site work and assembly. In order to save money, we hope to have as much donated in the way of goods and services as possible.

Right now we need site work (dozing, levelling, etc.) and ready-mix concrete for slabs—which is very expensive. (Does your uncle own a concrete company?)

This is a major step for the Ranch and we are very excited. We hope to see you as we raise 'em up.

Ranch Camp!

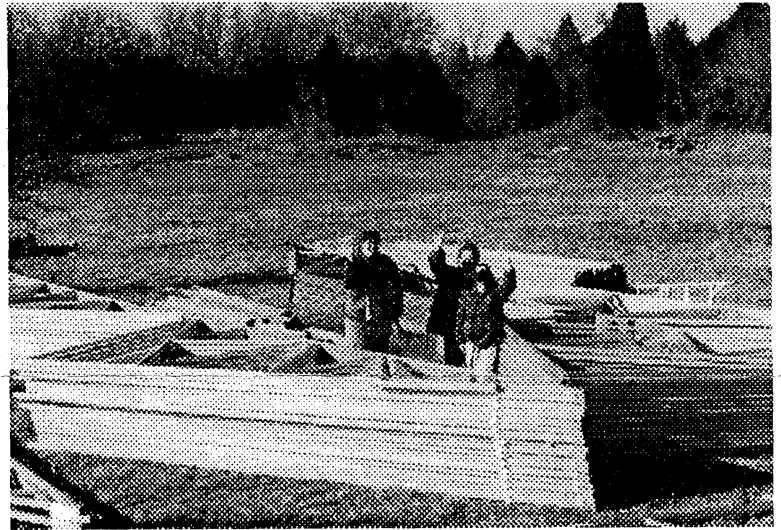
Both sessions of this summer's Ranch Camp are nearly full, and we're looking for good staff and volunteers. We need:

- Female counselor (Age 19+)
- Two male counselors (Age 19+)
- Camp Cook
- Camp Medic (LVN, EMT, M.D. or equivalent)
- Activity Director
- Cabin Buddies (Volunteer position, age 14-up)
- Day volunteers to help with activities

All positions except Cabin Buddies carry a stipend. However, persons willing to volunteer for normally paid positions can free up money for scholarships, and we have a number of requests this year.

We also need lots of things for camp: more bunk beds and mattresses, cots, towels, adult trikes, sports, fishing, and musical equipment.

See you on the hayride!



Lynne, Terry and Lynda inspect piles of steel columns, purlins and trusses for the new greenhouses and shadehouses. The additions will enable the Ranch to become a major grower of herbs and perennials.

We Wish for...

- ... a trainer to train Smokey the pony to pull a cart
- ... a four-wheel cart for Smokey to pull plus harness
- ... scholarship money for campers
- ... a typewriter (despite computers, we need one)
- ... concrete, donations of lots and lots of concrete
- ... a good, used 10' shredder (prefer with 3-point)
- ... help in all aspects of erecting greenhouses
- ... a landscape architect to donate some time
- ... a teacher/class/other to make a model of DHR

What's Coming Up?

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| March 22 or 23 | St. Stephen's School—Work Day |
| April 19 | Work Day |
| May 10 | Berry picking, jelly making |
| May 30-June 1: | Camp Orientation for Staff |
| June 15-20 | Ranch Camp—Session 1 |
| June 22-27 | Ranch Camp—Session 2 |

Ranch Has Cat-astrophic Spring

Help. A good deed has turned into a feline overpopulation problem. A kitty rescued from the road has left us with a surfeit of very fine, but excessive, cats.

If you are interested in adopting one, please let us know. These are very friendly, pretty kitties. Meow!

Easter 1997

Judy Horton

This year a deep hope abides in our hearts—the hope of building a first resident home, a first Ranch House. We're ready, and we know several special people who are more than ready to move into their very own place!

Not long ago I heard something on the radio about getting your own home. It was a program on the "orphan trains" of early in this century. A New York clergyman, despairing of the condition of the thousands of orphaned and abandoned children in the city, conceived the idea of sending them west on trains to find homes on the farms and in the small towns of the Midwest.

Advance preparations to receive the children arriving on the orphan trains was carried out by local church people and residents. They tried to match children to homes where they were truly wanted. Sadly, some children were taken in as indentured servants.

One man, now quite elderly, recalled his experiences.

He was one of the older children on the orphan train—too old to be cute, too young to be very useful as a hand. That didn't stop an unscrupulous family from trying to use him as such, however, and when it became obvious he couldn't do the work, he was dumped back on the local authorities who tried to find him another home.

For one reason or another, this home didn't work out either. By this time he was convinced nobody wanted him just for himself. He was prepared to go on to adulthood alone, generally friendless, and without much in the way of prospects for the future.

But then a miraculous thing happened. A third family came forward and took him home. He didn't dare believe this situation would work out any better than the others, and stayed in the room they had given him until the lady of the house called him for supper.

The man's voice cracked with emotion as he described what happened next.

"Well, I sat down and looked at the meal, and I thought to myself that if nothing else at least I'd get some good food out of this latest adventure. I prepared to pick up my fork to eat, but then my foster mother laid her hand gently on mine to stop me.

"She bowed her head over the food, and my foster father did the same. They clasped their hands in silence for a few minutes, and then my foster dad said 'Lord, we thank you for this food you have given us, and Lord, we thank you so much for sending us a *son*. We ask your blessing on this food, and on this boy. Please help us to be worthy of all your gifts.'

"My heart just melted clean away," he said. "I knew I'd come home, and those good people gave me the best family a boy could ever have dreamed of."

By this point in the narrative my own heart was pretty well melted. Imagine the love in the hearts of those dear people, welcoming a boy from across the country, and *accepting him as their very own!*

Of course, for Christians, this should be a familiar story. Through the gift of his own Son, God accepted us as his sons and daughters. There we have found our heart's true home. When we rejoice in the Resurrection on Easter Day, that is what we celebrate.

The orphan trains will not stop at Down Home Ranch. Most who will come to live here have good families, warm homes and love to give. But they too, as they mature, need their own special place. They want friends to share, work to perform, a community to call their own.

For these special friends we labor. Please pray for the Ranch to be able to build this year.

Matching Gifts

Did you know that there is often a way to double your gift to Down Home Ranch, at no additional cost to you? Many businesses will match the gift by an employee. We have gotten such matching gifts from IBM, Apple, Motorola and others. Ask your employer. It could be a match!

Randalls & Krogers

Also, remember that we can get a percentage from your purchases at Randalls and Krogers. You need to get a "Remarkable Card" at Randalls and give our number, **3227**, before the clerk tallies up.

At Krogers, you present your "Share Card" as you check out. Call us if you want a Share Card.