



UPDATE

from
Down Home Ranch

Down Home Ranch, Inc. Rt. 4 Box 292C, Elgin TX 78621 (512) 856-2246

March 1995

Out of the mouths of children, babes in arms, you have made sure of praise.

(Matthew 21:16)

“Out of the mouths of babes” indeed! My daughter Kelly often reminds me of that verse.

Kelly, who has Down syndrome, has not lost the simplicity of childhood, and I count on her daily reminders about what’s really important.

She insists that our family members frequently say that we love one another. “I love you, Mommy. Do you love me?” “Yes, Kelly, I love you with all my heart.”

“Oh, Mommy,” she responds passionately. “I love you with all my life.”

Kelly knows that her very life depends on that love—knows it in a direct and uncompromising way.

At other times she picks up on family tensions and asks “Mommy, do you love your honey? Tell your honey that you love him.” Naturally, this comes when I am feeling least loving toward my “honey.”

But she persists until we see our own grumpiness or rudeness for the silliness it is, and laugh and give each other a hug. Thus Kelly is reassured that the web of love and caring that sustains her is intact.

Left to the devices and desires of my own heart I forget that I, too, depend on a web of love and caring—spun by God and by family and friends.

I look at the faces at my breakfast table, and Kelly reminds me to see the miracles there. She prods me to tell them I love them. Of course, my morning scripture readings tell me the same thing, but Kelly has appointed herself the enforcer!

How thankful I am that she has. How would I feel if, late in the day, I discovered that it all would end tonight at midnight?

What if on our last day together I’d said hurtful things, failed to forgive some silly slight,

forgotten to say “I love you?”

Thank you, dear daughter, for the truths you speak. Thank you, Lord, for the precious gift of family you have given me. I do love them with all my heart, and with all my life. Praise be to God!

Judy Horton - Lent, 1995

Photo by John Zimmerman



A Season of Lent at Down Home Ranch

As we write it is the season of Lent, observed by much of the Christian church as the 40 days of "fasting, prayer and the giving of alms" that precede Easter. Lent is typically translated as "spring-time," a season of new growth, when the earth comes alive again. Hens get broody. Calves are born. Leaves burst out of the trees.

So, too, at this Ranch we observe the significant dates in the church calendar, as we also mark the changing of the seasons.

The start of our Work Readiness program, bringing folks with mental retardation to the Ranch for training, on-the-job experience and paid work,

will be a sea change for us. We are ready.

Yet, we don't know how we will get over the next few months as expenses rise and income slowly tags behind. Starting a new program is expensive. We must be more frugal.

This Lenten season is hard- a time in the desert with little to eat or drink!

Each gift is more precious these days. "Ah, with this we can get a few bales of hay" or "Yes! We can send some money to the printers." If it is a large gift we can make the tractor payment.

Like our many friends, we must have our "time in the desert." But it is a season. It too shall pass.

Faithful to the Christian mission to provide for those in need, Down Home Ranch seeks to offer safe homes, meaningful work and a supportive community to adults with mental retardation.

*For me you have changed my mourning into dancing,
You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.*

Psalm 30:6

Down Home Ranch depends for support upon contributions from individuals and organizations. We are thankful for those who put their trust in us.

*Down Home Ranch, Inc.
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