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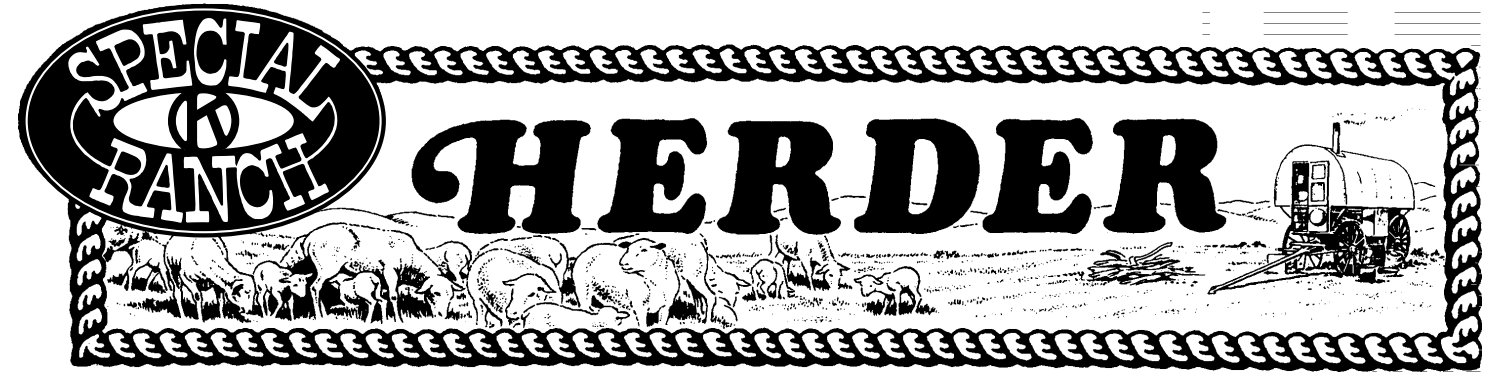
www.specialkranch.com
E-mail: skr@wtp.net



Jeremy shootin' some hoops at Special Olympics with Coach, Gary and spotters anticipating the "swoosh!"

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MISSION STATEMENT

Providing family oriented Christian homes for adults who have developmental disabilities, on a working ranch.

VOL. 18, NO. 2

"Shepherding the Hesitant"

DECEMBER 2004

Tell your friends about our website at www.specialkranch.com

A BIG THANK YOU to LIVESTOCK DONORS

...who bought and donated livestock from the county fairs and the NILE.
Also to those who donated from their own herds.

OWN HERDS (2004)

Betty Burnett
Don & Joyce Lorash
Jim Yager
Davey Farm
Peter Yegen Jr.
Haven Marsh
Burnt Leather Ranch
Bair Ranch Fdtn
Louis & Cathy Dubs
Tom Heineman
Haglund Ranch

FAIRS

Beartooth Lumber
Audrey Hanks
Okragly Cattle Co.
Delbert Wilson
Beartooth Electric
J O Miller
Mandeville Agency
J C Tire & Repair
Beartooth Ford
Milligan IGA
Dave Krueger
Pauline Mischler
Sandra Peck
Shiptons Big R
Steamboat Ranch
Montana Limestone
Dan Dutton
Red Lodge Country
Pelican Truck Plaza

Palisades Livestock
EBMS
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Dr Tim Dernbach
First Citizens Bank
Gary & Yvonne Rome
Brookstone Monument
Dave & Jennifer Wagner
Peaks to Prairies/Seibert
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Crowley, Haughey,
Hanson, Toole & Dietrich
Hanson Chemical
Project Merc. Food
Northern Ag Network
Taylor Brown
Ray & Agnes Havig

NILE

Crowley, Haughey,
Hanson, Toole, Dietrich
Farm Credit Services
Judith Wallinder
First Interstate Bank
Wilson Family Ranch

CONSIDER A GIFT

- Feed Grain and Hay
- Corral Panels
- Dishwashers
- Washers and Dryers
- Livestock,
Calves & Sheep
- Portable Generator
- Dressers
- Hand Tools
- Vehicles to be Used at
Ranch or Sold

These are some items that Special K Ranch could use. If you have any of these you would be willing to donate, please give us a call. We can turn your surplus items into tools for ministry. Call us at 406-322-5520



From
Everyone at
Special K Ranch



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By the summer of 1993 Special K Ranch was six years old and the growth and funding demands had become too much for one administrator. We were very fortunate to receive a two-year grant to fund a fundraiser/development position.

Nelson Rumore, former director of the Montana Rescue mission was hired for the position. When he left the job it was decided that I would continue the fundraising along with being executive director and we would hire a program director.

In July 1995 Michael Dooley was hired as our program director. Michael came with a strong business background and during his nine years with us two more resident homes were built and another house that was on the ranch was remodeled to accommodate four semi-independent residents bringing our resident population from twelve to twenty-four. The Wommack center was built and a steel storage building was erected.

Michael caught our vision of having a vocational program that would give the residents productive and meaningful work and with his direction we grew from a small 20' x 60' greenhouse to a complex of sixteen greenhouses covering 40,000 square feet. We just completed our sixth year of contract growing bedding plants and our second year of growing hothouse tomatoes.

We are very appreciative for the leadership and service Michael gave to the Special K Ranch and we wish him well in his retirement.

In this newsletter you will meet our new program director Mike Oberg. Mike is not new to the ranch but in his new position he is full time. Mike's sense of call to Christian mission, His gentle and caring spirit, gift of working with people, and experience in business will be drawn on as he takes on this challenging job. Welcome Mike.

PROGRAM OBSERVATIONS

When you know that you know! As I walked off the plane from a mission trip to Russia, I knew my life would never be the same. God wanted me in the mission field and I was sure it was in Russia. I began to pray that the Lord would make it clear where he wanted me. My wife Carla was sure it was some place a little closer to the equator. A few weeks had past when Carla came home and said that Jim Kimmery of Village Gardens wanted to take us to this ranch to see their horticulture program?

I had never heard of the Special K Ranch before that day. As we left the ranch I knew that God had answered my prayers. Our mission field was not across some ocean in some foreign land. It was in our own backyard at the Special K Ranch. Carla and I have been running the horticulture program for 6 years now.

With the retirement of Mr. Dooley, I was asked to consider taking over the position of Program Director. I began to pray about it and in time God once again put me at ease with the decision. As each day passes I am becoming aware of the responsibility that comes with this position. The daily decisions that affect the residents, staff, budget, and my personal family as well, have brought me to my knees in prayer that God will guide these decisions and that the outcome be pleasing to Him.

God has brought the best staff to the Ranch that I have seen in 6 years. I truly believe that they have put personal agendas aside for the common good of the

residents and the Ranch. I see their God given gifts being put to use just as our Lord planned it. This is the right staff, in the right place, at the right time for this transition to take place smoothly.

For those of you who do not know me yet, let me introduce myself. I have been married to my beautiful wife Carla Mae for 20 wonderful years. (God is good) We have a son Jarred who is 17 years old and a senior at Billings West High School. Our daughter Justene is 16 years old and is a junior at Billings West High School. Eight years later God decided that Carla and I did not learn enough as parents and blessed us with Jonah. He is 8 years old and a diehard Chicago Bears fan.

In 1996 I went on a mission trip to Haiti believing that I was going there to do something good for God. By the time I left it became very apparent that it was God who was doing something good for Mike. I have that same feeling here at Special K Ranch. God is doing something good for all who serve here at Special K Ranch.

In His Name,

Mike T. Oberg
Program Director



Gold Medal Team

SPECIAL OLYMPICS TRIP

Another year of Special Olympics basketball has passed, and it was very exciting! The games were held in Butte this year. We had beautiful sunny clear weather for traveling both going on Thursday morning and returning Saturday afternoon. When we arrived home there was a hot meal waiting for all of us at the Wommack center. Thanks to the staff that kept the home fires burning.

We arrived at the motel early enough on Thursday so there was time for everyone to enjoy the pool and hot tub. On Friday night there was an all you can eat pizza dinner followed by a carnival and dance. We had a nice following of family and friends who were able to attend and cheer us to victory.

Special K Rams showed such class both on and off the courts and were rewarded. One team brought home gold medals and one team brought home silver medals. Every player in individual skills won a medal this year. Also for the first time in several years every player on a team made a basket in a game. We are very proud of our Rams. They prove that cream rises to the top. Special thanks to our coaches – Ron Malloy, Kenny White, and Gary Jones for their love and efforts with our athletes.



Kenny's Silver Medal Team



Larry and Linda Phelps Home Advisors at Ostrum House

MEET THE PHELPS

How to get to Special K Ranch? Well you answer an ad in the Montana Livestock magazine. That's how we got here. Hi, our names are Larry and Linda Phelps, parents of four, grandparents of eight, and now home advisors to four men at Ostrum house. We hail from Colorado and have been at Special K Ranch since April of 2004.

As a couple we have farmed and ranched most of our forty-two years together. Larry was working for a company that took care of DD adults when we answered the ad. I had been unemployed for two years. We were talking about making a change but our families said Montana – did we realize how far away that was? Well, it is an 18-hour drive, that's how far it is.

After hearing about the homes, the greenhouses, the farm, the animals, and of course the people we would be assisting, everyone was happy for us and helped us pack.

Taking care of animals, crops, and cooking is just what we do well. Having people like Rod, Jeremy, Ron, and Tim appreciate what you do for them makes our job meaningful. Getting to know the staff, the residents, and their families has been a pleasure.

We are not cold and snow lovers, but everyone has assured us we will love it here. The decision – at our age – to leave our elderly mothers, children, grandchildren, church and friends was not easy. But here we are lock, stock, and barrel; getting into the swing of all there is to do here at this place called Special K Ranch.

When God wants you to do something and makes things happen in just a few days, it's almost impossible to say no.

Special K Ranch is set in such a beautiful spot along the Yellowstone River. With the hills behind to the south, the big sky above it is a piece of heaven on earth for 24 residents and staff.

SKR FOUNDATION Charitable Gift Annuities

A gift annuity can provide you:

- A lifetime income for one or two people
- A significant tax deduction (if a Montana resident, a tax credit)
- Attractive, fixed interest rates for your lifetime
- A worthy investment, helping to improve the lives of people with disabilities

YOUR WILL A Way To Help Others

A will is the simplest form of a planned gift and it affords everyone the opportunity to help others and have a living legacy. Consider naming Special K Ranch in your will for a percentage, a specific amount, or as the sole benefactor. Special K Ranch could also be named as beneficiary of a life insurance policy, your tax-deferred IRA or other retirement plan. The blessings you have received will continue to bless and help others. (Check with your attorney for the proper legal forms and wording.)

