

B.O.K. BRIEFING

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"Cute-Boy" Brown - A Parent's Perspective

On one frightening evening, our lives were changed forever. Maxwell, our 14 month old son, went to bed with a small cold. We gave him some Tylenol and kissed him goodnight. Little did we know this would be the last time we would see our "normal" (walking and talking) child. His fever spiked up to 104.5 degrees around midnight. The speed of this fever set Max into seizures. The hospital was unable to stop the seizures which lasted 2 1/2 hours. His brain swelled, and cut off the blood to the brain, causing a stroke. In one frightful evening Max had lost everything. He was now a 14 month old newborn. He was left without speech, understanding, and all muscle tone. The doctors could only tell us to watch and be patient. No one knew his prognosis; only time would tell.

Max has always loved animals. His first word prior to his illness was "dog". Max had spent three months in the hospital after his stroke. One of the few things that he seemed to appreciate were animals and other children. It was this fondness of animals that took us searching for therapeutic horseback riding. A friend told us about the program at the B.O.K. Ranch. After our first call, we knew we had found the place for our "cute-boy".

We spoke with Heidi, who was the instructor at the time. She made it clear that this program would accept any child who needed their service [approved by the child's doctor]. She also told us she would make room for Max to start immediately. Our economics were at an all time low. My husband was out of work for the first time in 8 years. I, being a teacher, was being served with layoff notices. Needless to say, we couldn't afford to pay. We were grateful to hear about the scholarships available to help families like ours. The BOK Ranch was obviously set up for the RIGHT reasons: for the needs of the disabled.

SAVE SUNDAY, JUNE 26th for BOK's Ninth Annual WESTERN DAY!

It is nearly time to get on down to **Western Day** at the B.O.K. Ranch where there's going to be the plenty of fun for everyone. Ninth Annual **Western Day**, from Noon to 5 pm, is the B.O.K.'s largest event and kicks off the coming year. It is a special time where we can thank our volunteers and many supporters while having a good time under the cool oak trees at the B.O.K.'s headquarters. This year, we have designated **Western Day** as Volunteer Appreciation Day as well. Volunteer awards will be given and a volunteer team picture will be taken for each of the volunteers to have. Valrie Massey will photograph the event.

We are happy to say that once again Canyon Inn will provide the "vittles" for this event. For the children there will be children's games, a petting zoo, balloons, a clown and more! The 4H club will have demonstrations and the silent auction will return (get those bids in early!). Carol Crowther and the B.O.K. Student Body will have riding demonstrations. It will be an opportunity to see B.O.K. Ranch in action. And for those with a song in their heart & rhythm in their feet, the dance floor will be open.

Admission is \$25. for adults; children under 12 are admitted free.

If you are interested in attending or would like to help with this event please call the B.O.K.'s main number: (415) 366-2265.

SEE YOU THERE, PARDNER!

Max, who is now four years old, has made incredible growth over the past one and one half years with the B.O.K. He started off as a limp body being held on the saddle by the two side walkers. The gait of the horses resemble that of walking. Slowly, his back grew stronger and his hands started to occasionally hold on to the reins. His balance improved with the constant shifting of the horse's gait. This increased balance has helped him learn how to sit-up, crawl, and now stand. He now appears to be riding the horse, no longer just being taken for a ride. Either way, his physical therapy became enjoyable.

We are grateful for the hard work and care shown to us by all those associated with the B.O.K. Ann, Carol, and all of the volunteers still continue with the same giving spirit we were shown on the very first call to Heidi. All of them have shown us just how much they believe in their work. Our "cute-boy" was forced to take a different path than that of most children, but with the help and support from the entire B.O.K. program, he is learning to trot to a different drum. Thank you B.O.K. Ranch, volunteers and supporters. I hope you are able to help many other "cute-boys" in the future.

Sincerely

- Amy Tigerman-Brown, Mother

B.O.K. BRIEFING

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Address letters, suggestions, articles, and inquiries to B.O.K. Ranch at the address above.

Spring Session Report

by Carol Crowther

On March twenty-third the spring session sprung with 67 students including Morgan Center school. The program is at full student capacity.

The weekend prior to spring session about a dozen volunteers old and new came out to Hidden Villa for volunteer orientation training. Our volunteers are the best group of people I have ever worked with. I wish that we could just clone all our existing dedicated volunteers in order to have enough help during lessons on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons.

I want to thank the student's parents, siblings and companions for understanding our situation, and jumping in to help.

Two very special thank yous are in order for Don Morris who donated all the lumber and labor to make a wooden bridge for our obstacle course, and for Becky Doty and her 4-H group from Hollister who donated their time on a Thursday afternoon. Also a million thanks to Steve Ondry for all his endless help with numerous B.O.K. projects.

NARHA Conference Report

By Carol Crowther

Last November I had the amazing opportunity to attend and participate in the NARHA (North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc.) annual conference and instructor training workshop. The location was beautiful scenic Lexington, Kentucky. Just being in that area was a thrill in itself. Endless rows of bright green limestone rich fields divided by immaculate black or white wooden fencing indicated that this was a land devoted to horses.

The first few days of the workshop and the seminars were fairly intense. We didn't leave the hotel much. However, when we were scheduled to see some farms and the Kentucky horse park, the local NARHA host committee did an excellent job organizing the group of 585 participants.

I was overwhelmed with so much to learn and so many people to meet. I met people from all across the country who could relate to the experiences of teaching therapeutic riding. Along with the loads of new information and some answers to questions I brought with me to the conference, I left the conference feeling great about B.O.K. Ranch. The conference reaffirmed that we are doing things correctly and efficiently.

I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the 1993 conference and receive a certificate for the instructor training workshop. Now I know what to expect and look forward to this year's conference where I will be taking the test to become a NARHA certified instructor.

Volunteer Connection

Many thanks to our our dedicated volunteers. Helping us in the fall of '93 & this Spring session are Brooke, Vivian, Sandra, Sabrina, Charles, Celeste, Franco, Chrissy, Cathy, Fidela, Joan, Wendy, Fred, Noel, Christina, Sally, Julie, Ann, Linda, Trina, Kim, Rebecca, Lyndsay, Jamie, and Lynsay, Neal, Amy, Jane, Matt, Alice, Darlene, Karna, Jennifer, Suzanne & Marissa.

We are always looking for volunteers. It is only through the volunteer efforts that this program is possible. So, if you can do it or know someone else who might be interested in a rewarding opportunity to help, *please call Justine Felahi, the Volunteer Coordinator, at (415) 325-6113.*

B.O.K.'s Ongoing Wish List

Horse supplies:

The Block, Repelex fly spray,
Source vitamins, Rain Maker hoof oil, Paste
wormer.

Funds:

Contributions for the Beverly Aiello Scholarship
Fund
Printing costs for brochures, newsletter, and stationery
Horse boarding sponsorship
Someone to make cavalettis ()

Human resources:

Grant writer

Miscellaneous items:

Office supplies
(fax and photocopy paper, etc.)
Stop sign and Go road sign

Thanks Once Again Derby Club

Our thanks is extended once again to the Derby Club at Bay Meadows for donating \$5000 to the B.O.K. Ranch. This is the second year they have sponsored us and we are looking forward to working with them this coming season.

Volunteer Portrait

by Brooke Fox

When it was first suggested that an addition to the B.O.K. newsletter be written by a volunteer as a portrait piece, I thought "Great, it gets my vote!" I didn't know I would be doing it or that after several rewrites, realize it was a harder task than it appeared. It would have been much easier to write about my two daughters Marissa and Sabrina who now volunteer with me!

I had to think way back when I first started to look at the "Volunteers Needed in the Palo Alto Weekly. I always felt it was important to help at school as often as I could while working full-time and my daughter's schedules kept me very busy. So did two dogs, three cats, gardening and my friends. But I felt something was missing. When I found the AD asking for help with a therapeutic riding program, I was really excited. I called right away and was told the new session started in a few weeks. At that time I was unsure where Hidden Villa was or what to expect, but I knew I had a desire to give my time for a special cause. Being a mom, I know *a little* about kids, get along well with everyone, and had a few years of teaching computers. Being from the East and brought up around horses in the country was also a plus. I felt sure the B.O.K. was the answer for me.

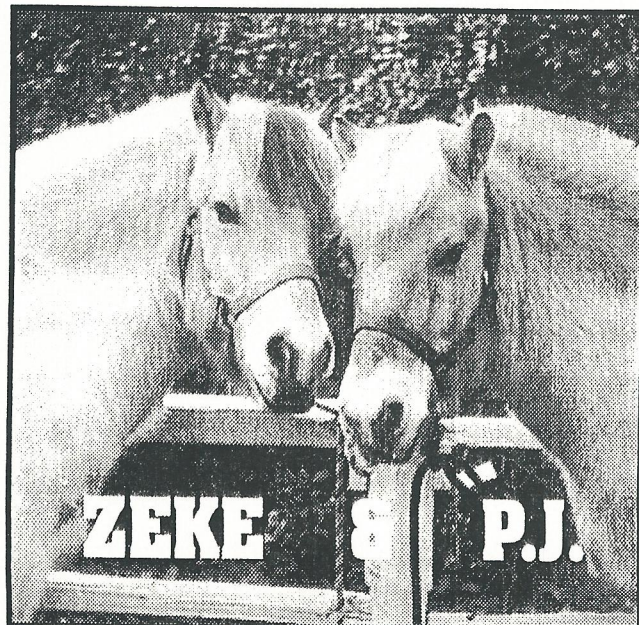
Since that first Saturday, my view of the world has really changed. Being able to participate in a program that is so beneficial, worthwhile and necessary has been a gift for me. I have always tried to be a good

example to my children by giving my time to certain endeavors - but to this program I now have an emotional attachment. The reward of helping a student through a lesson and being able to be part of a positive place in their day gives me a lot of joy. Its like planting a seed and watching it struggle up from the soil into the sun - growing until it blossoms from its bud. Every week a little different and a new challenge to discover

Volunteers come for all reasons. I think my reason was to give of myself, to help me feel more of a good and useful human being towards others. I have tried to show my children by example the feeling you get inside about yourself when you help someone else. It somehow comes back to you making you a fuller and more loving person. It helps you realize peoples lives can be made better by a helping and caring attitude towards others.

I am content to be able to fill my Saturday afternoons in the very enjoyable company of the talented and gifted students, my children , the new friends I've had the pleasure of meeting and of course PJ, Zeke and Shale.

For me, the B.O.K. has really become my special place.



Calendar of Events

Hidden Villa Spring Fair
May 1, 1994

Los Altos Pet Parade
May 14, 1994
Downtown Los Altos (Morning)

Last Day of Spring Session
May 14, 1994

First Summer Session Begins
May 25, 1994

All Seasons Horse Show
June 11, 1994

Western Day
June 26, 1994

End of First Summer Session
July 9, 1994

Start of Second Summer Session
July 13, 1994

Play Day
August 20, 1994

End of Second Summer Session
August 20, 1994

A Thank You to Kainos

For the past year, Kainos has been responsible for the distribution of the B.O.K. Newsletter. Kainos is a non-profit organization located in Redwood City which provides a number of services for developmentally disabled adults. Our thanks for all of the effort and support they have extended to the B.O.K. Ranch.

Donations

Many thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Ondry
Mr. and Mrs. David Caulkins
The Kulchin Family in Memory of Jack Sain
Ruth Carney in Memory of Leslie Morrison
Mr. and Mrs. Milton Waldron
Ann Giacomelli
Julie Stathes
James Toland
Jacqueline Daniel

Grants

Sports Association of Northern California
Recreation Agency (S.A.N.C.R.A.) - \$500

"Historically, volunteers have always been on the cutting edge of social needs—they do things before anyone else figures out we need institutions to do them. Volunteers actually create jobs."

— Susan Ellis of Energize, Inc., a company that provides consultation in volunteer program development.

"From now on in America, any definition of a successful life must include serving others."

—George Bush, former U.S. President

"Treatment on horseback is unique, because it transfers a very definite series of motions to the patient and thus has an organizing effect on his motion. It restrains his freedom of motion and stabilizes him in a useful way. This is in complete contrast to the freedom of movement provided while swimming. In water, all movement must be generated completely by the patient's nervous system, while the horse helps the rider in dictating their basic structure."

—Jurg U. Baumann, M.D., "Therapeutic Exercise on Horseback for Children with Neurogenic Disorders of Movement"

"Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead."

—Louisa May Alcott

"I think confidence is the main achiever of success."

—Dolly Parton



B.O.K. Ranch
1815 Cordilleras Road
Redwood City, CA 94062

YES! I can help the B.O.K. Ranch!

Please contact me regarding:

- Volunteer some time with students.
 Equestrian and/or office equipment you can contribute. Horse sponsorship program.

Donations of any amount are always welcome at the B.O.K. Ranch. You may make checks payable to: B.O.K. Ranch. They may be earmarked for any of the following areas:

Riding Sessions
Volunteer Training
General Expenses

Special Events (e.g. Playday)
Equipment
Educational Clinics

Please find enclosed my check for _____ to be used for _____

The B.O.K. Ranch is a non-profit corporation. EIN# 94-2947980.