

All The King's Horses Children's Ranch



THE TRAIL RIDER

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He who loves
with purity
considers not
the gift of the
lover, but
the love of the
giver.

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Year gone by & Year to come

For the past several years, some of Benson's winter visitors & Tucson businesses sponsored Christmas parties and presents for The Children's Ranch. This year the leaders of that initiative, Larry & Donna Webb, came up with a new idea. Or should I say, Donna came up with a new idea. Larry smiles lovingly when Donna saunters up to him with a beaming, "*Larry! I have a great idea!*", knowing it will cost him time and/or money.

Donna's new idea came about because in the past when the children opened their presents, you could tell it was not always something they really liked. So she came up with praying about purchasing gift cards for each child and then taking them shopping. As we prayed about it, it became clear Donna's idea was divinely inspired.

People began to give toward The Christmas Event. Funds came in to take twenty-nine (29) children! Folks volunteered to drive. Children and volunteers met together for prayer and instructions beforehand. I asked the children not to purchase anything I would not approve of – no violent games; no violent music; no M&M. (Afterward, Donna said the seniors wondered why I wouldn't approve of M&Ms since I am such a chocolate fan. I explained M&M is a rock group whose lyrics depict and idolize violent murder of loved ones. We chuckled about the generation gap and that she was relieved the kids could have chocolate M&Ms.)

The children were urged not to spend the entire amount on themselves; but to buy for at least one other person as well. With that Donna handed each child a WalMart gift card for \$50.00. We closed in prayer. Lastly Donna wanted the children to know that this Christmas Event was sponsored by people who had been blessed by the Lord so much that their abundance flowed over onto them, the children.

What a time we all had. The youngsters were very generous buying for others. One boy only bought for his mom. Got her a phone card and then called her every few minutes during the afternoon of shopping and eating. At the pizza joint we wrapped the presents. Then we sang happy birthday to Jesus, cut a cake, ate pizza and drank soda. Thank the Lord it was early enough in the day for everyone to run off all the carbs!

Thank you, volunteers and givers, for making this a Christmas never to be forgotten. The children learned it is not easy to shop; it is work to shop well for others; no matter how much money we have, it seems like we always needs just a little bit more; wrapping each present just right sometimes takes more than two hands; and that a giving heart first started with God Himself who loved us so much that He gave ... He gave His only Son – and that is WHO Christmas is all about.

A CHILD SAID THAT

Recently I sat on the floor at Sunrise Day Care surrounded by pre-schoolers. What joy! Two of the little people trotted over and threw their arms around my neck. The little boy sat on my leg, the little girl close to my side. We became fast friends just like that. The little feller picked up my very heavy purse. *"You can carry my purse around for me, but please don't open it, ok?"* He lifted my purse with all his might, flung the strap over his little shoulder and tried to keep the purse from dragging on the floor. Both children were drawn to the shiny, silver charm bracelet



dangling from the purse zipper. *"What are these?"* they asked most seriously.

"Those are God's Ten Commandments", I smiled.

The little girl's eyes got real big. She whispered real slow, in a most reverent tone, *"OOO, what do they say?"* I melted. *"Well, my young friend, God's commandments tell us to love God and to love one another."* (Mat 22:20) With deep awe and joy she said, *"OOOO - that is good."* Yes it is.

That is very good.



THE ANNUAL FUN FUND RAISER

I'm not sure how the Lord led us to begin the fund raiser. But it grows from year-to-year; and the people of God are excited about it.

This year's occasion will host special guest speaker, Carol Whitworth, Exec Director of our mentor organization, Sunshine Acres Children's Home in Mesa, AZ. SACH boasts in God of an impeccable fifty-year history. Special entertainment is by the Infante family, AZ State Fair winners at tap dance and clogging. Special music by the talented family of *'Sage-n-In-Loves'* (my fond nickname for them). Special meal by Chartwells Catering. And a special challenge to match an anonymous \$6,000 donation. The special setting is the grand room at Cochise College. Picture windows run almost from floor to ceiling that allow us to gaze at the million-dollar view of the grand San Pedro River Valley with the starry expanse above.



This special day is held on the Friday before Valentine's Day making it a perfect date for sweethearts. It is our desire the Lord be glorified that evening as we celebrate what He is doing in His children while He furthers His Kingdom in Benson, Arizona. For after all, the Lord is the Sweetest Heart of all.



TMI - TOO MUCH INFORMATION

"Mommy, where did I come from?" the little boy looked innocently up to his precious mother.

O, Lord, she prayed. Is eight-years old too young to begin with the birds-and-bees? Plunging ahead she cloked much of the mystery of the sexes in

medical terms. She finalized her lesson giving glory to God as Creator of every good and perfect gift.

Timidly she asked if her dear son understood what she said. *"I think so, mom. I just wanted to know because Billy said he was from Cincinnati."*

WINTER WONDERLAND

If ever there was such a place as a winter wonderland, it is ATKH Children's Ranch. We praise the God of wonder and might as we watch Him lead some of His own to give of their time, talents and dollars during the winter months. I speak of those snow birds who fly here during the northern cold. Being from the Buffalo area, I never thought I would be thankful for winter. But I rejoice to see the Lord shuffle some of His flock from the snowy hill country of Colorado down to the warm winter land in Benson. And The Children's Ranch is the beneficiary of our Lord's winter visitors. If you want to thaw out this season, you are welcome to come on board. Smiles, hugs, good food, rejoicing hearts await you. And if you have a mind for it, something productive to do, as well.

I want to say a warm thank you to our Colorado volunteers:

Don & Sue Zentmeyer & friends

and

Larry & Donna Webb & friends.

God bless and increase your wealth
while He maintains your vigor as you spend yourself for Him.
You are a joy to everyone who knows you.
You've made this summer-like desert a winter wonderland.