

January 2013

RUNNIN' WJ

HORSESHOE REVIEW

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Shoes and Singing

Eighty percent of Runnin' WJ students are living near or below the poverty level. For those of us who can purchase new shoes for every season, it's hard to imagine an elementary school student going to school in a pair two sizes too small.

Matt and Corey Graves began the organization "Laces of Grace" for this very reason. Matt, a former football coach, after taking one of his players shopping, found the teenager didn't know his own shoe size. They purchased a new pair two sizes larger than what he had been wearing. In 2010, Matt and Corey formed, "Laces of Grace," a local ministry seeking to provide

brand new shoes to children in need in the Texarkana area.

During the Christmas 2011 season, the ministry partnered with us to provide shoes for all of our students. This year, Matt and his team brought shoes to the children as well. Also, the local Old Navy store helped us purchase fleece jackets for each child and United Way of Great-



Matt Graves, founder of Laces of Grace, poses with Jayden, a Ranch student.



Jayden makes a new friend with Ramin Karimloo, singer and actor, who visited and fell in love with the Ranch and its mission.

er Texarkana provided new backpacks. As the staff and teachers celebrated the season with Runnin' WJ students, volunteers and instructors stepped up to fit a pair of shoes or help pull a jacket over a head. Kohl's Department Store of Texarkana also came to help fit shoes and celebrate with the kids. We ALWAYS appreciate when Kohl's comes to volunteer at the Ranch. They always bring such wonderful workers and new friends to the Ranch. We also had a wonderful group of homeschoolers come to volunteer. They were a wonderful help with the kids and with other big projects!

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One day during a class celebration, Runnin' WJ had a special visitor. Ramin Karimloo, the man who starred as The Phantom in the 25th Anniversary performance of the famous musical, The Phantom of the Opera, stopped by just in time to meet Jayden and Roger and help them with their new shoes.



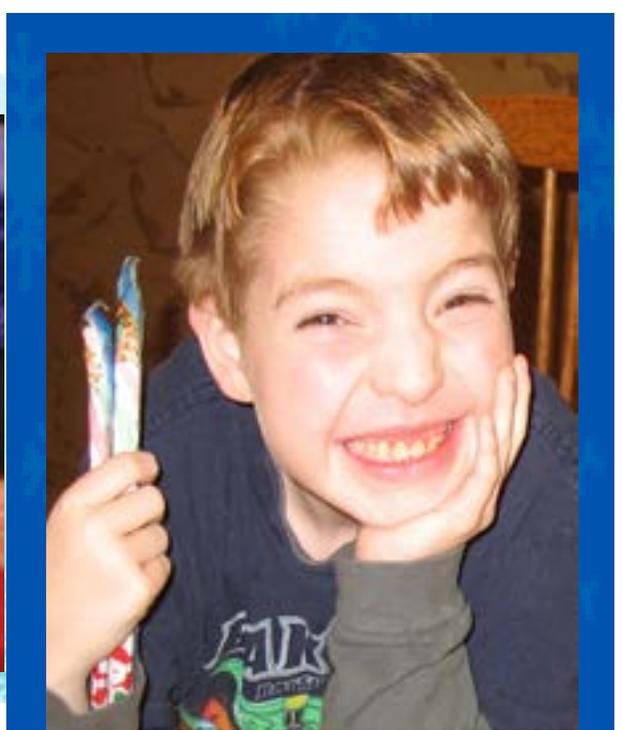
Ramin had always wanted to visit Texas, and in December his wish was finally granted as he traveled to Texarkana, Dallas and Austin to meet area high school students and also perform three concerts. The theater star felt the warm hospitality of the south, and was impacted greatly by the Clem family and Runnin' WJ Ranch. Ramin hopes to return to the Lone Star State very soon.

We were very blessed this Christmas season by friends such as Matt and Corey Graves, Old Navy Texarkana, United Way, Kohl's Cares and our new friend Ramin Karimloo. Thank you to all who helped make this special Christmas possible and for loving our kids. -WJ





Lauren and Kaylie are good buddies.



Ethan J. is happy about his candy!



Joshua is excited about his stuffed dog!



North Heights Junior High Students Decorate Sonny Boy!



Selena loves her new "furry friend"



Kristen, Kellie, Kamila and John show off their Christmas socks.



JANUARY



Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			2	3	4	5
6		8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16		18	19
20		22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

*JANUARY *VOLUNTEER BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Erica Andrade- 11th | Joan Cutler- 13th | Mary Ted Mayo- 8th | Brittany Rogers- 23rd |
| Laura Arvizu- 19th | Thomas Davis-25th | Arthur Merrell- 1st | Craig Russell- 6th |
| Jacob Ashford- 26th | Tanya Dickert-18th | Kristen Morehead- 11th | Tammie Russell- 12th |
| Tena Boyd- 25th | Diane Fort- 7th | Alicia Morris- 17th | Cindy Simmons- 31st |
| Devin Brock- 17th | Kate Frank- 31st | Alecia Murray- 16th | Donna Smith- 16th |
| Daniel Bryan- 27th | Lindsey Griffin-17th | Lynda Olson- 23rd | Caroline Spain- 9th |
| Lisa Cash- 12th | Kim Harper- 8th | Allison Payne-8th | Lisa Thomas- 2nd |
| Pat Cheatwood- 12th | Grace Horn- 26th | Stephanie Presley- 12th | |
| Jenny Collins- 1st | James Jester- 5th | Angela Rea- 19th | |
| Noah Crissman- 27th | Rebecca Martin- 20th | Martha Nell Richards- 9th | |

2012 HIGHLIGHTS

1. Second Annual Cutting Event in February proved to be a BIG success with 250 cutters participating
2. Mary Lynn Burns joins the Runnin' WJ Ranch staff as Public Relations and Development Coordinator
3. BIGGEST Benefit Barrel Race in June with 1,700 riders over the three day event
4. Two famous singers visit the Ranch. Dave Pittman, American Idol Season 8 Finalist and Ramin Karimloo, actor and singer who has appeared in famous musicals in London such as Les Miserables and The Phantom of the Opera
5. Runnin' WJ Ranch appears on the Radio, first time radio ads can be heard on Kicker 102.5, The Mix 93.3, Power 95.9, Eagle 106.3 and KOSY 790 AM.
6. Runnin' WJ Ranch quarterly newsletter is converted to electronic monthly newsletter and is given a new name, "Horseshoe Review"
7. Record year of riders for the 2012-2013 riding season with 185 students
8. Benefit Trail Ride, Team Roping Event and Reining event were also successful, introducing new equine lovers to the Ranch
9. Runnin' WJ Ranch launches its challenge to local churches: One Church. One Child. Several churches accept the mission to help fund student scholarships
10. We welcomed several new therapy horses to our equine staff.

**2012, OUR ELEVENTH YEAR IN OPERATION,
WAS A BLESSED YEAR!**

RUNNIN' WJ RANCH

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

1. Convince Sam that he is anything else but “outstanding.”
2. Conduct a census for the entire Ark-La-Tex region and collect email addresses for all citizens, so everyone will receive the “Horseshoe Review,” monthly.
3. Convince Ms. Narda that “everything will be okay,” even when all her volunteers call in sick.
4. Dust the staff office everyday, to create the illusion that we don't work in a barn.
5. Celebrate Sam's birthday, on his actual birthday.
6. Have three famous singers visit the Ranch by December 31. (Hey, in 2012, we had two...what's one more?)
7. Start listening to Narda.
8. Say “Christmas Trees,” instead of “shoot,” “darn,” “crud” or “dang.”
9. Refill the toilet paper and paper towel every time it runs out in the restrooms.
10. Get a pair of boots to match every Runnin' WJ Ranch shirt, so we can be cool as Narda!

All kidding aside, our ONLY resolution for 2013 is to LOVE OUR KIDS like Christ loves them and like they love us! Thank you for joining us in reaching our goal for 2013.

Happy New Year! ~ WJ

NEW YEAR? NEW CHALLENGE.

One Church. One Child.
Your church can make a difference in a
child's life this year.
Call us to find out how.
(903) 838-3223.

