



# The Ranch Review



## State of the Ranch



**North East View off Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch**

As I look over the site, in my mind's eye, I see a 1<sup>st</sup> class, Christian, teen learning and healing center in the making. I see an oasis in the desert. I see a city on a hill. I see lives being changed. I see hearts being healed, and broken families being mended. I see God's kingdom being expanded. God wants to do so much here.

At our very 1<sup>st</sup> board meeting, many, many years ago, I told our board that the vision for Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch is so large that God would have to intervene on our behalf if we are to be successful. As I look at where we are today, I see just how true that statement is. Although much progress has been made –acquisition of the ranch site, fencing on over two-thirds of the

30 acre parcel, an installed water system, the planting of 30 trees, implementation of a successful youth-in-transition program (in which we witnessed our first high school graduate, see Success Story on page 2), we have not been successful in raising the necessary funds to build the 1<sup>st</sup> house on the site.

Our goal is to build the 1<sup>st</sup> house and infrastructure, including road improvement, debt free; to accomplish this, we estimate we need a minimum of \$1,000,000 if we hired a contractor to do the work. If we self-build (which we plan to do), utilizing volunteer labor, and as much donated materials as we can get, we estimate the cost to be much less, around \$500,000 or less. At this point, we have tried everything from grant-writing and fund-raising events, to soliciting private and public donations, but we have not managed to raise the needed funds. You could say we are at our wits end, and that would be about right. Psalms 107:27 reads: At their wits end, then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brings them out. Therefore, having come to our wits end, we trust in God's word, we commit our case to the Lord, trust in Him, and expect Him to bring it (the ranch) to pass (Psalm 37:4).

**Con't on page 4**

## A Success Story



**Deon displaying his High School Diploma**

Deon came to us in November, 2012, when he was a senior in high school. He was homeless, failing the classes he was currently taking, and was behind 5 other credits due to having failed classes in the past. Marvin began mentoring Deon immediately, and brought the issue before the board of director's for authorization to create a "Youth-in-Transition Program". The board voted unanimously for the program, and Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch took on its first client.

Because he was currently enrolled in school, Deon was considered a "Child in Transition" by the Washoe County School District due to his homelessness. As such, he was eligible to receive some support from various resources through the school; therefore, SNTR collaborated with his high school and provided Deon with housing, guidance and direction, and the supervision he needed to bring stability into his life. With these basic needs in place, Deon buckled down and began the long process

of catching up on the credits he needed to graduate, and passing the proficiency test requirements in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma.

Deon spent his summers working at the ranch helping Marvin build fences, install a water tank, water & irrigation lines, and planting trees. Although his schooling, work, and day to day life experiences were very challenging and seemingly impossible at times, we are pleased to report that Deon has completed all requirements, and has received his high school diploma. With his diploma in hand, his focus shifts to a military career. Congrats Deon! God bless you.

## Trees



**Blue Spruce along the west fence line**

Our tree planting project accomplishes a threefold goal: 1) to provide a wind-break across the development site, 2) to enhance the overall beauty of the site, and 3) to begin putting the allotted water to beneficial use. To accomplish this, we purchased 30 blue spruce trees (seedlings), and planted them on the west side of the

property line adjacent to the fencing. We installed irrigation lines complete with timers to insure proper watering. Our hope and prayers are that Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch will grow and mature as the seedling grow and mature. Pray for our trees to grow because we will grow right along with them.

## Water System



**Marv and living water at the ranch**

We started the water system back in 2002, when we dug the well and built a pump house to enclose the meter, the generator, and the on and off switch. Last year, we installed a 5000 gallon water tank and ran a water line to a yard hydrant (thanks to Rick at Western Nevada Supply for donating these materials). We installed another water hydrant this year, continued work on a pond to provide a water source for irrigating crops, recreation, and future

fire suppression needs. Last but not least, we continued the fencing project.

## Marv's Education

In the mist of everything that's been going on, Marv managed to go back to school, and graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work; along with the BS came a "Certificate of Commendation" from Senator Harry Reed. Although his goal is to eventually get a Master's in Social Work, he is taking time off to regroup, seek the Lord's direction for the ranch, and follow after His lead.



**Marv poses in front of his BS in Social Work Degree**

Marv thanks everyone for the support and encouragement he received, which made this accomplishment possible. You can view a clip from Marv's graduation at the following link: <http://youtu.be/if2MhGadmGU>

## **State of the Ranch,**

Con't from page 1

This is a perfect place to ask for financial support, but in recognizing the need for divine intervention –we have to let the Lord bring the right person and/or people to us— we will wait for His lead. I remember when we ran into so much opposition finding a ranch location; it was so bad we had to stop our search, and commit the task to the Lord. Our prayer was: “Lord, if you want us to build a ranch for at-risk teens, you will have to bring the property to us; we will not look for property nor ask others to look for us”. We waited to see what the Lord would do. It took some time, but God was faithful, he brought the 30 acre parcel SNTR own to us. Now, facing a similar difficulty, our prayer is: “Lord, if you want us to build the ranch, you must bring the resources to us”.

As I bring this article to a close, I just want to say that, we are where we are supposed to be (at the right location), we are doing what we are suppose-to be doing (building a ranch for teens), and we are

confident of this: “***that he who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion***” (Php 1:6). Although much time has passed since we embarked on this mission, we must understand that we are on God’s timing, not ours. I am reminded of the Israelite’s forty years of wandering in the wilderness before entering the promised-land, of Joseph’s long captivity before God brought his dream (vision) to reality, and how David was anointed King long before he was crowned. In view of God’s timing, “***let us not grow weary of doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up***” (Gal 6:9). We covet your prayers: that we will remain strong and faithful until the day dawns in-which God will firmly establish Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch. Thanks again to all of you who have supported us along the way, especially to you who still do, we know we could not have made it this far without you.

As Christmas approaches, may you experience God’s richest gift –Jesus Christ!

*We Wish You A Merry Christmas*

*And a*

*Blessed New Year!*

Marvin, Jan, Nathan, Danny, and Brad