

Son Care News

May 2006



*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for good and not for disaster, plans to give you a hope and a future."
– Jeremiah 29:11*

How Is Thousand Hills Pet Resort Changing Alpha Students' Lives?

We have been talking a lot lately about **Thousand Hills Pet Resort**, and we are pretty excited about it! As we share that excitement with you, we also want to spell out how it **directly** helps our students, and others in the community, each day. Through the Pet Resort, God is blessing others in ways we never envisioned! Here are just a few examples:



Jack speaks about Alpha, with (from right) Phil, Mitch, Chris, and Davey.

Student Growth

The Pet Resort has been a fantastic learning experience for our students, as it reinforces and builds on the lessons we teach in the classroom. The construction process involved the students as planners, budgeters, and builders. As the buildings went up, the students could see the progress, and take pride in the fact that they were contributing to something lasting.

Each day our students serve our customers, and it's been remarkable to see our guys smiling, greeting the customers and **running** to get their pets for them. Our students are learning invaluable business, life and relational skills that will benefit them for years to come.

New Volunteers

The Pet Resort has given us much more community exposure and involvement. Several people have contacted us about volunteering to work directly with our students. Our guys have been "adopted" by one lady in the community, who works with them on cooking and other home skills. We met last week with a man who had read about us in the

local newspaper, and is excited to teach goal-setting classes to our students. Another young man, who brings his dog to daycare, invited one of our students to lunch, and is taking him to a concert next week. (You can't imagine how important it is to our students when people *outside of Alpha* want to invest in them!)

Others have donated time and supplies (we just received new tile for our kitchen floor, and someone else donated the labor to install it!), and still others have donated financially to Alpha Academy as a direct result of coming to the Pet Resort. We have worked to get people in the community to take a more active role in our students' lives, and the Pet Resort is helping to make that a reality.

Community Outreach

We expected the Pet Resort to have an impact on our students. What we did **not** expect, however, was the impact it would have on others in the community. One dear lady has been bringing her pride and joy, Roger, to the Pet Resort for several months now. She has told us several times how the loving people on our staff have blessed her. **THAT'S exciting!** She recently jumped at the chance to be our "Ambassador", going to dog parks to spread the word about Alpha and the Pet Resort.

We've also been able to work with other young people in the community, like Davey (in photo above, with Jack), who spends each Friday out here helping. Our students can be mentors and leaders to these young people, who in turn learn and grow from the experience. We never expected these opportunities, but God knew **exactly** how He would use the Pet Resort to bless others!



Phil, with Roger (left) and Aslan (right) at Dog Days.

Financial Support

Finally, the Pet Resort has been a huge blessing financially, and helps us keep our doors open to serve more students. This is no small detail, as we have committed to **earn our own operating expenses** and not siphon resources away from other ministries. We try to combat any "entitlement" mentality, and to model that work ethic for our students.

The Pet Resort has earned over half of our operating budget this year to-date. As we get into the busy summer months, we expect income to exceed Alpha's operating expenses. This is **really exciting** for us, because as we spend less time and energy scrambling to make ends meet, we have more time to devote to our students, and to making Alpha better.

Please Keep Praying For Us!

Ten years ago, when we were just getting started, we never imagined that God would use dog boarding as a vital part of Alpha! Yet He's using it to bless people far beyond our expectations. Please pray for our students, staff, volunteers and customers (human and canine) as we continue this new adventure!

Presidential Suite Grand Opening!

Son Care Foundation celebrated the grand opening of the new **Presidential Suite** at Thousand Hills Pet Resort on March 22. The event featured a ribbon-cutting and remarks by actor Steve Ford ("*When Harry Met Sally*", "*Black Hawk Down*"), son of President Gerald R. Ford.



Steve Ford speaks at the Presidential Suite dedication.

San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors 3rd District Supervisor, Jerry Lenthall, Son Care founder Jack Gould, and representatives of CA Congressional, State Senate and State Assembly members spoke. It was very encouraging to hear in *their* words

Alpha Academy's positive impact in the lives of the young men we serve. U.S. Representative Lois Capps sent a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition for Alpha Academy, and we were also given Certificates of Recognition from State Senator Abel Maldonado and Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee. Congressman Bill Thomas rounded out the presentations with a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol. Over fifty local contributors and business leaders attended.

The Presidential Suite is adorned with an American flag, photos of Presidents with their dogs, a luxury bed, nightstand, and a Presidential Seal on the door. A webcam is coming soon, so family members are never too far from their "best friends"!

We Have A "New" House Leader...

We are really proud of Tony! He came here as a student several years ago, came back as staff, oversaw the flower business and the ranch facilities, and is now our newest House Leader. Tony has a wonderful heart for God and for our students, and has done a great job keeping this place looking good! Please be praying for him as he settles into his new role.



Other Prayer & Praises

We currently have two students, with 2 or 3 more in the application process. Please pray for Chris, our newest student, and Phil, and also for past students Brice, Robbie, Noah, and Mitch. We are also looking for a second house leader, and praying for Kyle and Danny, last year's house leaders. We are still tight financially, so please pray for God's protection and provision over Alpha Academy.

We are grateful for how God has shown his faithfulness time and time again. One student in particular has **really** matured over the last several weeks, and we joke that we don't recognize him anymore! We're thankful for continued financial provision, for our staff and their hearts for our students, and for reports from past students Estevan and Dave who are doing well. We are also grateful for **YOU**, and for your prayers and support. Thank you for your partnership!

New Way To Help!

Do you ever shop online? If so, please check out: www.alphaacademy.myfundrazor.org. They feature hundreds of online retailers, from Starbucks to Home Depot to Target, and Alpha Academy receives a portion of every purchase. It won't cost you a penny more, and it benefits Alpha. Please look it over next time you're online!

Also, if you are trying to buy or sell a car, we'd love to earn your business. Please check out webcarsandtrucks.com and missioncars.com or call 805-596-0258 to learn more!