



Rodeheavers Boys Ranch

August 2012

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### 2012 Officers Installed



Dr. Richard Perallon, President  
 Don Holmes, Esq., V.P.  
 Karen Hughes, Secretary  
 Samuel Taylor, Treasurer



*“ It’s better to build boys than to mend men.”*

From the Executive Director:

Dear Friends,

I hope this edition of the Ranch Wrangler finds you in good health and spirits because we are living in some exciting and challenging times where the "faint at heart" had better keep to the sidelines or risk "not making muster."

Our staff "makes muster" every day. Our people are composed of those who have different, yet in some ways similar, skills that make it possible to operate a children's (boys) ministry in this day and time. The skills are similar, because boys, for the most part, have the same needs as they grow into manhood. The skill sets are different, which are good, because the needs of boys differ due to backgrounds from which they came.

While talking with one of the new guys the other day, he was explaining how he "just did not do homework," and stated, "he wasn't going to do it." I replied that he "did not have enough information to make a good decision - that until he accomplished the homework completion directions and understood how happy it makes his teacher and his cottage mom, he would never know the joy of being a happy young man."

He looked at me like I was from another planet and said, "Nobody can make me do something

I don't want to do." I told him that we agreed on that for the time being, and then we talked of his fragmented family and his plans for the future. He had a great deal to say about what he wanted for himself and those around him.

After he said all he wanted to say, I showed him in Scripture where God recorded the principle dealing with, "We've talked a lot about this, now let us get to the performing of it..." He said his family did not believe in the Bible. I said, "That's ok - you can borrow its greatness and success principles without believing it all - just so you can be the man you've talked about being."

He gave me a strange look and said, "OK, we'll try it this way -but just for a while." He later left, did his homework, and now does well in school. I speak when I see him, he just smiles and confidently goes his way....now his way is the right way.

Somebody cared enough to get him to the ranch. Some teacher declared she wasn't going to accept less than his best. Some cottage mom and dad "drew the line in the sand." He then listened, learned, and is now making good choices.

Our Director of Ranch Life, Steve Watkins, told a boy here a while back that he needed "to get squared away" and to not take long about it. During a counseling session we defined what "being squared away" meant. Steve is a retired Naval Officer and told us that it meant your uniform, grooming, and quarters were neat and clean and that you did your job to the best of your ability.

We broke the definition down a little more for the boys. A square has four even corners so we came up with 4 rules and their definitions. I. Glorify God. (specifically) (A) God created you. (B) God has a plan for your life. (C) His Plan is better than yours. II. Be Thankful. (A) For our food (B) For our clothing (C) For our shelter and home (D) For somebody loving and taking care of us III. Be Obedient to those in authority. Do what you are told when you are told - in the time frame you are told with a good attitude- and then report back afterwards. IV. Make Good Choices. (A) Seek out wise and good advice (parents, teachers, pastors, counselors). (B) Assimilate and prayerfully consider your options. (C) Do what is right even if it is unpopular.

Well, you can see that if and when a young person follows the above, they will certainly be "squared away." Ranch boys are like most other young people - they are facing difficult times and have a past of difficulties - not all of them their fault.

Thank you for caring enough about them to help us help them. The answers to the times they face are still the same - just not as popular.

Sincerely,  
Ken Johnson

## Ed and Joy Hedstrom Lifelong Friends of the Ranch



There is hardly anyone around who can understand the ins and outs of the ranch better than Ed Hedstrom. His advantage began early in his college years when he took on the job of running the ranch during the summers, so Skipper Pierce, then executive director, could go on vacation break with his wife and family.

"We're talking about the late 50's here - back in the early days of the ranch. We had about 25 boys and my job was to oversee the work crews, supervise activities, and generally see to their well being. It was challenging and I was always glad to see the Pierces upon their return. I made some life - long friends in those early days. I still tease around with Tommy Clay about how he gave me those summer - long jobs each year and am thankful for the years since," Ed states.

Ed and Joy, who have always made their home in Palatka, have two children, Dallas and Scot, who presently are following in their dad's footsteps. Scot is in law school. Dallas is a practicing attorney in Jacksonville. Ed's older children, Gail, Ronnie, and Randy have families

of their own giving Ed and Joy bragging rights on five grandchildren. Ed has recently retired as circuit judge and now makes himself available as a mediator and senior judge as needed.

Ed was asked to come on as a board member in 1967 and has served on it since that time. He served as president of the board from 1988-1990 during some challenging times from a legal perspective. He acted as board attorney from 1967 to 2000. Then Don Holmes took over when Ed became circuit judge.

Ed and Joy have been regulars at staff Christmas functions and are always a great encouragement to the staff. He is the only board member who has an RBR Employee lapel pin. Ed and Scot have made several backpacking trips with the boys and staff when Scot's schedule allowed the time.

Judge Hedstrom also began the ranch tradition of celebrating our Boy Scout Court of Honor in a Putnam County Courtroom in front of several robed judges. The merit badges and other honors are given out and afterward, the judges offer some very good advice.

Ed also serves on the Rodeheaver Foundation as secretary. He is joined by a group of past presidents of the ranch board whose sole mission as a group is to assist the ranch in matters of concern as needs must be addressed.

Ed and Joy make their home in East Palatka and are attempting to get accustomed to a semi - retirement schedule. Ed said, "Having the joy of serving on the board is easy since I live every day with Joy who loves the ranch as much as I do and supports our work all along the way. It's still exciting to be a part of something so special."





# Annual Picnic And BBQ, Auction And Good Eats!



The 62nd Annual Meeting BBQ was a lot of fun and allowed for a lot of reminiscing. Patti and her staff served out hundreds of BBQ picnic meals that were enjoyed in a nice sit down setting. Tommy Clay had an opportunity to relate to the audience about his 60 years as a board member. Marc Spalding was honored with a plaque after serving two years as president of the board. Bobby Cothren purchased the mini tugboat that was auctioned by Auctioneer Roy Strickland. Ed Hedstrom, Dan Martinez, Marc Spalding, and Executive Director Ken Johnson kept things moving on the program. John Browning purchased the 50th Anniversary shot gun and donated it back to the ranch. Horseback rides and tours rounded out the day for a good time for all.



***“Only you  
can make my  
dreams come true.”***



**RODEHEAVER FOUNDATION**



**We Invite You to  
Take a Leadership Role by  
Investing in the Future as a  
Rodeheaver Dream Builder.**

Yes, I want to invest in the future of  
**Rodeheaver Boys Ranch.**

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(please print)

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**Rodeheaver Foundation**  
3400 Crill Avenue, Suite 1  
Palatka, FL 32177



## Planting Peach Trees, Thriving Blueberries, and Grapes Galore!!!



## The Jumping Beast & River Fun



## Ranch Needs That Come To Mind

1. Twin Mattresses
2. Cottage washers and dryers
3. Commercial Mowers
4. 40 to 50 hp tractor
5. Horse Hay
6. Tents (Camping & Shelter)
7. Bicycles
8. PC's running Windows 7
9. Cottage Water Treatment Systems
10. Sturdy Bedroom Furniture



# RODEHEAVER BOYS RANCH - A GOOD INVESTMENT

Somewhere back in the late 1940's, Homer Rodeheaver, Harry Westbury, and a few other local leaders in Putnam County were burdened about the alarming increase in juvenile delinquency among the area's youth. They decided to take action on their concerns and began raising money to start a boys ranch and titled the campaign, "The Starting Of A Great Investment - A Boys Ranch."

That dream became a reality in 1950 when 790 acres, located about 12 miles south of Palatka, Florida, on the banks of the St. Johns River, were set aside to become a home for wayward boys.

The original idea was that if the community could provide a safe, loving home situation for boys who were much less fortunate, it would remove the boys' incentive for a life of dishonesty. I thought that maybe our readers might like to see a glimpse of the past...to actually see what was in the heart of the men who blazed the trail to make Rodeheaver Boys Ranch what it is today.

Below I have listed the main points printed in the first brochure advertising the mission and purpose of Rodeheaver Boys Ranch (at that time it was originally Rainbow Ranch, but was later changed to Rodeheaver Boys Ranch).

1. The Need as seen in 1950: "Every 18 seconds of each minute of each day, a crime was being committed in the United States; the criminal population was increasing 4 times faster than the population of our country; criminal careers began in childhood and the alarming increase in Juvenile

Delinquency made this rank as our country's number one problem." Rodeheaver Boys Ranch was established to fill that need, with the motto, "It Is Better To Build Boys Than To Mend Men."

2. The Original Purpose: The Boys Ranch was originally established to provide a wholesome home environment with religious, school, and vocational training for boys, who through neglect, poverty, or unsatisfactory home adjustment were drifting into delinquency.

3. Boys Qualifications: Admission was granted to the homeless, abandoned, neglected, or underprivileged boys age 12-16. All boys must be physically and mentally normal. Guardians, welfare agencies, churches, and courts made applications on the boys' behalf.

4. Financial Support: The ranch was and still is a non-profit organization to be supported entirely by voluntary contributions from those who believe in giving less fortunate boys a new start and a chance to make good in life.

5. Proposed Plans: It was proposed that the Rodeheaver Boys Ranch be set up on a small cottage plan of 12 boys and two cottage parents to each unit. Central cooking facilities, a chapel, and educational buildings were included in the plans. The original plan called for an investment of over a million dollars.

6. Religious Instruction: The ranch was to worship as a non-denominational group with regular services planned to meet the needs of each boy. Sane practical applications of Christian principles were believed to be the only solution to the prob-

lems of our nation.

7. School System: The educational program started in the 5th grade and continued through high school.

8. Operation: The activities of the ranch were handled and directed by an Executive Committee selected from the Board of Directors.

Over the past 62 years there have been plenty of ups and downs in maintaining the financial needs of the ranch. Along the way there have been several occasions where it would have been tempting to take the easy way out by changing the ranch's philosophy and start accepting government money.

Thanks to the generosity of groups and individuals over the years, the ranch still maintains its original identity. I can just imagine the conversation between Homer Rodeheaver and Harry Westbury as they look down and see the boys living on the ranch today.

They believed that a boy needed to learn to work as if his success in life depended completely on him, but to pray like his success completely depended on God. We hope that all of our readers will consider helping us continue this vision, and to those who helped us get to where we are...thank you and God Bless.

**Jeff King**  
Development Director

## Judges Mendoza, Dupont, Christiansen and Morris Help Troop 337 Host Merit Badge Court of Honor.



**Scoutmaster Greg Buchanan recognized the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts that collectively were awarded over 180 merit badges for their hard work for this term. Eagle Scout Brett Buchanan assisted in the proceedings.**

# Rotarians Enjoy A River Picnic With the Staff and Boys



Palatka Rotarians joined the staff and boys doing some boat rides, hay rides, horseshoes, shooting sports, and a fine picnic with BBQ chicken and pork and all the fixings.

A beautiful day was complete with beautiful people.



## Carlton Spence Grand Marshal

Carlton and Ruby Spence were recognized for their part in establishing and making it possible to improve the two Bluegrass Festivals we host each year. Ruby's brother, Donald Harper of Virginia, was the first grand marshal, because he persisted that the Bluegrass Festival idea and the ranch were hugely compatible. "Our 9 year Bluegrass Festival history proves that the ranch and bluegrass is a good marriage. The people who listen to the music are the kind of people that appreciate what we do. They are good for the staff and boys and their value systems closely match the values of the ranch. It has been good for us and will continue as the years roll by," states Jeff King, Director of Development. Carlton was introduced to the ranch long before he promoted the bluegrass idea. Now deceased, long time Putnam County Sheriff Walt Pellicer invited Carlton to the ranch in 1988 for a visit and the partnership with the ranch family began.

From 1997 to 2002, he served as president of the Ranch Board of Directors. Since then he has served on the foundation and been at the forefront of several building projects.

Carlton was a recipient of the Wagonmaster Award for his leadership and was the Grand Marshal of the 2012 February Bluegrass Festival. A Henry Mare's Leg lever action short rifle was presented to him to commemorate the occasion. (Marshals need their guns!)

Carlton and Ruby have three children: Jeff, Donald, and Cindy, and each have their own families. Carlton has over 23 years of service with the ranch and over 80 years of birthdays. He and Ruby have celebrated over 60 years of wedded bliss.

The ranch is fortunate to be part of their family. Each September 15 (or so) boys

are invited to Carlton's Bitter End Hunting Plantation in Ridgeland, S.C. to participate in an annual hunting experience. The meat is harvested, processed, and brought back to the ranch freezer for the occasional wild game feasts. On this trip, the boys and staff undergo environmental training from officers of the South Carolina Department of National Resources. This is always a great time for the ranch participants, invited guests, and hunting guides. Carlton and Ruby and their family have continuously been a friend of the ranch since their first introduction.

Carlton has also exposed some other great people to us through the years and they also have been great assets and provided needed leadership for us.

"The fact is apparent that Carlton Spence loves this ranch and its mission. He puts

his light on the candlestick in a major way. His enthusiasm is contagious and his vision is a pleasure to share," states Ken Johnson, Executive Director.

Bobby Cothren, long time friend and business associate, states, "Carlton invited me to the ranch for a tour and when I saw the work, I was hooked. One of my greatest joys in life is serving on the board with people like Carlton. With his help, we have accomplished much and the difference we all make together is what keeps us going." Carlton and his family have owned and operated up to seven highly successful corporations before retirement.

Carlton's life experiences can be read in his biography Guts – The Story of Carlton H. Spence by author Susan D. Brandenburg.



SHERRY BOYD, M.C.

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"It is better to build boys  
than to mend men"

5th ANNUAL!

# FALL PALATKA BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

## OCTOBER 11, 12 & 13, 2012

A FAMILY FESTIVAL

"Queen of Bluegrass"



**RHONDA VINCENT  
& THE RAGE**  
(Thursday, 11th)



**THE SPINNEY BROTHERS**  
(Friday & Saturday, 12th & 13th)



**SPECIAL CONSENSUS**  
(Thursday, 11th)

NO VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING



**DOYLE LAWSON  
& QUICKSILVER**  
7 Time IBMA Vocal Group & Gospel  
Recorded Performance of the Year™  
(Saturday, 13th)



**RODEHEAVER BOYS' RANCH**

**380 BOYS' RANCH ROAD  
PALATKA, FLORIDA 32177**  
(10 MILES S. FROM PALATKA ON STATE ROUTE 19)



**JETT'S CREEK**  
(Thursday, 11th)



**CHARLIE SIZEMORE  
BAND**  
(Friday, 12th)



**THE STEVENS FAMILY**  
(Thursday, 11th)



**THE JAMES KING BAND**  
(Saturday, 13th)



**LOU REID & CAROLINA**  
(Friday, 12th)



**LONESOME WILL  
MULLINS & SUREFIRE**  
(Friday, 12th)



**COUNTERPOINT**  
(Saturday, 13th)



**THE HAGAR'S  
MOUNTAIN BOYS**  
(Saturday, 13th)



**THE LARRY GILLIS  
BAND**  
(Friday, 12th)



**TED JONES &  
THE TARHEEL BOYS**  
(Saturday, 13th)



**AL BATTEN &  
THE BLUEGRASS REUNION**  
(Friday, 12th)



**GOLDEN VALLEY CRUSADERS**  
(Thursday, 11th)

(Ticket Prices Do Not Include Camping)

SHOWTIMES:	GENERAL ADMISSION		
	ADVANCE	GATE	RESERVED
THURSDAY, 12 Noon - 10 p.m. (Open stage at 11 a.m.)	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
FRIDAY, 12 Noon - 10 p.m. (Open stage at 11 a.m.)	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
SATURDAY, 12 Noon - 10 p.m. (Open stage at 11 a.m.)	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
3-Day Advance (Weekend Ticket Special)*	\$75.00	\$85.00	\$85.00
Children Ages 6-13, \$15.00 per day, 3 days	\$40.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Children Under 6			FREE with Parent

Tickets not mailed; processing fee on credit cards: (\$3.00 per 3-day ticket, \$2.00 per 1-day ticket)  
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**THE SUGGINS  
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(Thursday, 11th)

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Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for \_\_\_\_\_ (specify day(s))  
at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total) **F-FL**



# CAR OWNERSHIP – A B G STEP FOR BOYS

At the ranch, boys can earn the privilege to own an automobile but it isn't easy. Boys have to be eighteen (or pretty close to it) before it is a consideration.

The foundation, of course, is laid much earlier. They must first complete the State of Florida Drug and Alcohol classes. Then they take the written drivers test. If they are successful, they then get their restricted driving permit.

They then must wait one year before they can go for their official driver's license. The ranch prefers this to be right at their eighteenth birthday and about the time of high school graduation. This is not always possible.

Pictured is Jimmy Melanson, who has graduated and entered the work force in South Florida. Gerry Dixon is 18 and has another year of high school. Elijah Helmic's mother helped him with his car and at this time, he works within the confines of a restricted permit.



Jimmy Melanson



Gerry Dixon



Elijah Helmic

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# 8th Annual Palatka Bluegrass Festival



**Congratulations To Angela O'Conner**

Angela won the 5TH Martin guitar given away at the annual February Palatka Bluegrass Festival. The guitar was a brand new Martin HD 28.

as a fundraiser for the ranch.

Tickets to win the guitars are sold at all Adams and Anderson Festivals and then the guitars are given away at the February Palatka Festival each year.

Our thanks and appreciation goes out to the Martin Guitar Company for donating the guitars



## SWINE PROJECT FOR 2012

### ENDS IN PAYCHECKS AND SMILES



It takes a while to close the sale so far as receipts are concerned when selling a pig at the Putnam County Fair Pig Sale. But the wait is worth it according to our swine projects boys (and girls).

Pictured are 16 boys and 2 girls who worked from November through April feeding, cleaning, exercising, grooming, and doctoring their pigs and keeping up the facility that houses the animals. They posed for this shot at the fairgrounds just after dinner and awards evening.

## Purchase Your Cookbooks Now!

Boys, ranch staff, and our many ranch friends contribute to the Ranch Cookbook. Volume 4 is on sale. The book can be purchased through the ranch office or at the ranch store during our on-ranch fund raising events.

We've started on the next volume and need new recipes. We need crock pot, casseroles, and cook out recipes.

Please send your recipes to: [loismillerjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:loismillerjohnson@gmail.com) or to:



Recipe Lady - Lois Johnson  
380 Boys Ranch Road  
Palatka, FL 32177



## Rodeheaver Boys Ranch Vehicle Program

“Be a part of Rodeheaver history... your vehicle donation will help change a young man’s life!”

### Donate Your Vehicles

- \* CARS
- \* Trucks
- \* Vans
- \* Motorhomes
- \* Campers
- \* Motorcycles
- \* Farm Equipment
- \* Boats



**It's Better To Build Boys Than Mend Men"**

# *Rodeheaver Boys Ranch, Inc.*

380 Boys Ranch Road  
PALATKA, FLORIDA 32177-9980

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## **RANCH WRANGLER MAGAZINE**



Phone: 386-328-1281  
Web site: [www.rbr.org](http://www.rbr.org)  
E-mail: [rodeheaverboys@gmail.com](mailto:rodeheaverboys@gmail.com)

Edie Kynard, Editor and Lois Johnson Copy Editor  
Ken Johnson – Executive Director  
Steve Watkins – Director of Ranch Life  
Jeff King – Development Director  
Greg Buchanan – Vehicle Program/Activities Director  
Richard Peralon – President RBR  
Don Holmes – Vice President RBR  
Sam Taylor – Treasurer RBR  
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