

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 8/1 Breanna, Special Request, OKC
- 8/2 Randy Pickle, Staff, Development  
James Hopkins, Staff, OWA
- 8/3 Blaze, Special Request, BRT
- 8/4 Calvin, Special Request, OWA
- 8/5 Katy, Special Request, BHG
- 8/6 Kacey, Special Request, OKC
- 8/7 Korbon, Age 11, Staff Child, BRT
- 8/8 Jacob, Special Request, BRT
- 8/9 Amber, Special Request, OWA CH
- 8/10 John, Age 4, OKC
- 8/11 Letha Hemphill, Staff, HPC
- 8/12 Josiah, Age 16, OWA  
Trinity, Age 17, Staff Child, OBHC
- 8/13 Bella, Special Request, BHG
- 8/14 Steve Floyd, Staff, OBHC
- 8/15 Becky Strong, Staff, BRT
- 8/16 Cortny, Special Request, OKC
- 8/17 Karen Alley, Staff, HPC  
Rosebud, OKC
- 8/18 Charlie Jo, Age 5, OWA  
Valerie Collier, Staff, OBHC  
Debra Pittman, Staff, HPC
- 8/19 Kayton, Age 17, BHG  
Charity Lyon, Staff, NW Ministry
- 8/20 Maci, Age 6, Staff Child, BHG
- 8/21 Ryker, Age 2, OWA
- 8/22 Seth, Special Request, BRT TL
- 8/23 Dakoda, Age 14, BRT  
Haylon, Age 4, OKC
- 8/24 Sawyer, BRT TL  
Madison Payne, Staff, OKC
- 8/25 Maddox, Age 3, OKC
- 8/26 Makaila, Special Request, OWA CH
- 8/27 Brody, Age 14, BRT  
Deborah Young, Staff, Development
- 8/28 Mary Genn, Staff, BHG
- 8/29 Brooklyn, Age 14, OKC  
Cameron, Age 3, OKC
- 8/30 Nicholas, Age 17, BRT  
Joshua, Age 15, BRT
- 8/31 Terry Davidson, Staff, Development

AUGUST



**Michael**

\*BRT-Boys Ranch Town, Edmond \*OKC-Baptist Children's Home, Oklahoma City \*OWA-Baptist Children's Home, Owasso \*CH-Children's Hope \*TL-Transitional Living \*BHG-Baptist Home for Girls, Madill \*HPC-Hope Pregnancy Center  
 All dates are birthdays unless stated otherwise.

## More Man than Boy

by Angela Sanders, freelance writer

Sixteen-year-old Michael is the quintessential cowboy. Respectful and direct, he enjoys the great outdoors and always looking for opportunities to spend time in the saddle. "I love horses," Michael says, smoothing his hair back and readjusting his ball cap. "I think they are the best creature God ever created. You can tell them your secrets, and they won't tell anyone. They are great listeners."

Michael participates in the Boys Ranch Town (BRT) horse program. "It's great!" Michael says with a smile. "We get to take care of the horses and ride them and all kinds of things. Jennifer Kloeppel is the director. She makes sure we know how to be safe with the horses before she trusts us with them. I think I have proven myself by showing respect and earning trust in the little things.

Aspen is my horse. She's always glad to see me." Michael laughs. "But that could be because I always carry treats with me!"

When Michael grows up, he hopes to become a professional team roper. "To do that, you've got to go to a lot of rodeos and win," he explains. "If I can't be that, I would like to be a welder or work here at the Ranch. I think I would be good at teaching the kids how to be responsible horsemen and good cowboys. I'd make sure they knew how important it is to do the right thing when no one is watching."

Michael has lived at BRT for about six months. "I was having some anger issues," Michael explains. "My brother had already lived here at the ranch for two-and-a-half years and loved it, so my grandma thought it would be good for me, too. She knew they could give me opportunities she couldn't provide. My brother always said good things about the Ranch, but it's even better than he told me."

According to Michael, his houseparents, Brian and Leah Ingram, are two of the best things about BRT. "They are really nice," Michael says, "Me and Mr. Ingram get along great—we both like guns—and Mrs. Ingram answers any questions I have about the Bible." With a chuckle, Michael adds, "AND she makes some really good food! They are both loving people, but they are also strict—that's a good thing! Boys don't need to get away with doing anything they want. I think we are probably the best-behaved cottage, and it's because of them. They don't go too far when they discipline or anything—I did something wrong and got an early bedtime once—but they do teach us boundaries and respect. I know if I'm messing up, they'll tell me, and that encourages me to do better. I know someone who cares is watching."

Michael put his faith in the Gospel of Jesus before coming to BRT. "My cousins preach at Cowboy Gatherin' Church in Inola, Oklahoma," Michael explains. "A year or two ago, something one of them said stood out to me, and I asked Jesus to be my Savior. I try not to sin as much now because I know we are made to glorify God. That's our main purpose, and if Jesus can go to the cross for us, I think not sinning is the least we can do for Him. People who don't care about Jesus and what He did must not understand the consequences of sin all the way or know about Hell. If they did, I think they would be thankful and let Jesus help them change."

Michael appreciates everything his houseparents have done to help him grow both spiritually and as a person. "We have Bible study two times a day," Michael says, "They've taught me how to follow Jesus more closely, and they encouraged me to get baptized last month. They are also showing me how to be more of a man and not a boy, like how to show respect, hold doors open for women, and not be lustful or a glutton."


To those whose financial gifts have made his time at BRT possible, Michael says with all sincerity, "Thank you for your help! You're helping all of us get ready for the future. Because I came here, I know how to study the Bible on my own, and I know how to save money and spend wisely. I know if I have a wife one day, it will be important to treat her kindly, and that you teach kids respect by showing them respect like the Ingrams do. I think charity is a good thing. You're doing a very good thing!" 

photo by Shanna Rumburg

