



Jacob

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 10/1 Kylan, Age 5, OKC
 Camarion, Age 17, BRT
 Torren, BRT TL
 Hattie, Age 17, Staff Child, Development
 Ashlen Beavers, Staff, OBHC
 Stephanie Wilson, Staff, BRT
- 10/2 Tamara Doyen, Staff, OWA
 Melissa Litke, Staff, OKC
- 10/3 James Strong, Staff, BRT
 Stephanie Wintz, Staff, BRT
- 10/4 Tripp, Age 9, Staff Child, OBHC
 Luke, Age 11, Staff Child, HPC
- 10/5 Sergio, Age 16, BRT
- 10/6 Kenai, Age 7, OWA
 Erika, OKC CH
 Addelyn, Age 12, Staff Child, HPC
- 10/7 Heather Strong, Staff, BRT
- 10/8 Kristi Paul, Staff, HPC
- 10/9 Morgan Mosley, Staff, BRT
- 10/10 Sally Mitchell, Staff, HPC
 Kathy Hart, Staff OWA
- 10/11 Lillian, Age 15, OWA
- 10/12 Abbie, Age 9, Staff Child, OWA
- 10/13 Daphne, Age 17, Staff Child, BRT
 Karen McNeece, Staff, OBHC
- 10/14 Kenli, Age 7, OKC
- 10/15 Jackson, Age 6, Staff Child, OBHC
 Josie, Age 6, Staff Child, OBHC
- 10/16 Lisa Tolbert, Staff, HPC
- 10/17 Lieschen Saale, Staff, OKC
 Michelle Miller, Staff, OKC
- 10/18 Kaylee, Special Request, BHG
- 10/19 Nevaeh, Age 7, OKC
 Alexandria Langdon, Staff, OKC
- 10/20 Anna, Age 10, Staff Child, HPC
- 10/21 Shayona, Special Request, OWA
- 10/22 Jenna, Special Request, BHG
- 10/23 Tinlee, Age 8, OKC
 Leila, Age 8, OKC
- 10/24 Mariah, OKC CH
 Hannah, OKC CH
 Justin Endecott, Staff, BRT
 Christina Strauss, Staff, HPC
- 10/25 Jacie, Age 3, OKC
- 10/26 Joe Roche, Staff, BRT
- 10/27 Erika Shepherd, Staff, OWA
- 10/28 Ryker, Special Request, OKC
- 10/29 Michael, Special Request, BRT
- 10/30 Brittany, Special Request, OWA CH
- 10/31 Dara, Age 16, BHG

*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.

Just for a While

by Angela Sanders, freelance writer



photo by Shanna Rumburg

Depending on the circumstances, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children, Boys Ranch Town (BRT) either becomes home sweet home to the young men who live here or serves as a stopping-off place where they can rest, regroup and heal before stepping into the next chapter of their lives. For fourteen-year-old Jacob, BRT will serve the second purpose, but that hasn't kept Jacob from forming meaningful relationships or taking advantage of every opportunity afforded him during his stay.

"I've been here for about four months," Jacob begins. "My grandmother only had two months to live—she had cancer—and she wanted to put me somewhere good so I would be taken care of when she passed away while I waited for somewhere else to go. Right now, a family has shown interest in adopting me, and my dad is also working on getting custody of me. It has

helped to have a support system while I work through everything with my grandma dying and the court stuff."

"My brother told me this place would be kind of like a prison," Jacob admits. "So, on my way here, I expected bars on the windows and stuff like that, but when we drove up, I saw it was a nice environment. It was homey. I was surprised. I keep being surprised... in a good way."

"For instance," Jacob continues, "the people here are kind and nurturing. They honestly want to see us grow and have a good future, so everything they do is to shape and mold us into the best we can be. My house parents, the Embry's, are VERY kind people. I like them a lot. They aren't afraid to discipline me if I do something wrong, BUT they don't go too far. They've given me good advice on a lot of things, and it feels good to have someone to talk to."

Jacob became a Christian two years ago. "When I was in sixth grade, my grandma and I were going to church a lot," Jacob says, "and there was one message that stuck with me. The next week, I devoted my life to Christ and was baptized. I wasn't the kindest person before that, but since then, I've tried to treat people better. The Embry's have helped. We do Bible studies every morning, and they are teaching me how to be a godly man instead of just doing whatever I want or not treating women right. They are teaching me to have respect for all people. Before I came here, I didn't care what most people thought or said. I wasn't exactly bad, but I wasn't the best either, and that's changing."

Jacob has also been pleasantly surprised by the school system he is a part of now. "I feel like they're not just helping us do our work to do it, but setting us up to thrive," Jacob says. "The structure is great! I am able to get everything done quickly and well, and I'm excited about high school next year because I'll be able to take AP math and science."

Someday, Jacob hopes to become an aerospace engineer. "I want to be an aerospace engineer because I like to work with my hands, and I like numbers and logical reasoning," Jacob says. "Besides that, they get to build planes and other aircraft." Jacob grins. "AND the pay is good!"

Whatever the future holds, Jacob knows he will remember his time at BRT with gratitude, both for the people who spent time with him during his stay and for those whose financial gifts provided him with safety and opportunity. "I honestly don't know what I would have done if this place didn't exist," Jacob says thoughtfully. "I didn't have any other options, but now I'm on a path that sets me up for a good future and makes all kinds of good things possible. I'm thankful for that and for everything the donors do to give the guys here things they might not have had at home. Some don't even know what it's like to have electricity, water, or food before they came here. Being in a place where they don't have to worry anymore about having what they need makes a huge impact on their lives. It's good to see; I'm glad I came." 