

IN BALANCE TIMES

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Prom with Spring Ridge



From L to R: Matt T, Tommy S, Noah H, Connor C, Jacob L, Henry F, Jack C, Carver K, Ben B

Inside this issue:

The Phoenix Award	2
Basketball	3
Sysco Field Trip	4
Level 3 Retreat	5
Level 1 Retreat	6
Retired Professionals / Birthdays	7

By: Noah H

Before prom happened, the guys went on two outings to try to get to know the girls. On the first trip, we went to a fun park in Scottsdale, Arizona. We went laser tagging, go-karting, and went to the arcade. On the second trip, we went bowling in Casa Grande, Arizona and had a lot of fun. A week later, we went to prom at a resort in Scottsdale. The resort was a very fancy place. When we got to the resort, all the guys changed for about 25 minutes and then met up

with the girls. They gave us our boutonnieres, and we gave them their corsages. The event started at 5:00 P.M. and a lot of the guys were extremely nervous because it was their first formal dance. In the beginning, everyone spent a little bit of time catching up with each other. Shortly after, we had some delicious Mexican food. Then we all hit the dance floor. At first, it was awkward because a lot of the guys were experiencing anxiety because

most of us were not sober at events like this. After a while, everyone became comfortable and was able to dance with full confidence. We danced to all sorts of different genres of music. The girls even showed us how to line dance! By the end of the night, we were all able to connect with every girl. It was a great trip with a great group of guys! None of this could have happened without Peter Doyle and all the hard work he put into these events.



The *Phoenix* Level 5 Award



A Level 5 is a student that goes above and beyond the requirements of a Level 4 in the community. He is a leader in all aspects of the program. He is working a strong program and encourages others to engage in the 12 steps. He is a role model and reaches out to others who are struggling. He also asks for help with his struggles as they arise.

Robert has met these requirements.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Basketball



By: Baylor H

On May 1, 2018, the basketball players of In Balance Academy had their first basketball meeting. We learned the rules and values of the team, but none of us would suspect what the next day would bring. As we woke up on our first day of practice, we were excited to start our season. We learned very quickly that Coach Mark wasn't messing around. We went through the practice doing condi-

tioning and working our bodies to the limit. Whenever someone needed a break, our team would pick up the slack and encourage them to join back in and push through the struggle. We would not let the word quit be in our vocabulary. After running for over an hour, we brought it in for the classic "Warhorses on Three, One, Two Three, Warhorses." The next day was still a lot of conditioning, but something was different in the air.

We had formed a sense of brotherhood the first day and knew that we were getting better as a team. No one dared to complain because we all knew the whole team was pushing through the struggles. We finished up, and we all had a sense of pride because we lasted the first wave of conditioning. We know that there is more to come, but we also know that we will want to win more. We will be the best-conditioned team. We will build ourselves up physically and mentally. We know that Coach Mark knows how to win and will bring us to victory in our first game on May 31st and many more. Most of all we know that we will build the unbreakable bond of brotherhood.



Sysco® Field Trip



By: Jack C

The Culinary Arts elective has been a fun experience so far. We have learned about the importance of safety and sanitation in the kitchen, as well as tasting many herbs and spices to see how they can improve certain foods. We were informed at the beginning of the class that we would be taking a trip to Phoenix to tour the Sysco Factory. On April 26, the members of the class woke up early to leave for the long drive to Phoenix. The drive up was pretty uneventful, and most of us were asleep. When we arrived, our tour guide greeted us in the parking lot and helped us

through the process of signing in. We then walked through the offices and many departments that make the factory run and ended up in a very professional looking kitchen. We were greeted by a chef who would be guiding us through making our own lunches for the day. He showed us how to butcher a whole chicken, which I found to be quite fascinating, but others in the group were horrified by the sights and sounds that ensued. The chef also showed us various knife cuts which we got to practice as well. For lunch, we had chicken, which we had

to truss up ourselves, and rice pilaf that we also made. While our meal was cooking, we had a chance to tour the factory. This part really showed how big the building was, and it was cool to see some of the food products that the Ranch uses on the shelves. The factory was like a beehive, with forklifts and people zipping back and forth, loading and unloading various food products, to deliver the food to the many restaurants and companies that need it. After the tour, we ate our lunch, which was delicious, and then piled back into the van to return to the Ranch. Overall, this trip was a great learning experience for all of us and makes me appreciate the men and women who work hard so we can get fed.



Level 3 Retreat



Left to Right: Carver K, Jack C, Jake N (staff), Ben B, Matt T, Gabe K, Justin S, Enzo M, Tommy S, Jacob L, Jack J
Bottom Right: Therapist Cindee O

By: Jacob L

After having the chance to partake in the Level 3 Retreat, a variety of things arise when reflecting on the entirety of the experience. The initial word that comes to mind is self-enhancement, which was a prominent factor in the atmosphere of the retreat and provided a general goal among my peers, to create an emotionally safe environment. This increased the quality of the environment, which then invited vulnerability and took away any reservations any individual held. In other words, each individual decided to not keep anything back from the group during the weekend and was completely ready to be open, honest, and willing with others in the group. The groups we participated in strengthened an unspoken vow we, as a group, held, and that vow was one of confidentiality. Additionally, the groups we had throughout the weekend were far from being short-term and temporary fixes;

they provided an encouraging space to become very vulnerable and to face many of the struggles and issues which many of us may have, over the years, overlooked. The groups we had throughout the weekend were challenging and resulted in each individual exhibiting a deep-level introspection and vulnerability. Before the weekend I was filled with a variety of emotions, such as a joyous feeling, and to counter the joy was a feeling of anxiety regarding some of the fears surrounding my transition to home. Within the first group, I decided I was going to take the initiative to rid myself of any emotional reservation, which then led to me crying and being emotionally vulnerable with the group, which helped me immensely. Throughout the weekend, I was striving to be completely clear and open to the emotions which I was feeling through the entire experience and to work on the goals I had set for myself. The group was

incredibly supportive of one another and guided each other in the direction of discovering more aspects and components which contributed to each individual's framework. What I thought to be impressive was the perseverance and courage carried out by each individual in regards to their personal work, and the effort of creating a more efficient and supportive group. This resulted in a balanced weekend, which invited a lot of fun to the story. Some examples of the entertainment we had access to were going to the aquatic center and playing a mix of water polo and basketball, roasted marshmallows and conversed by the campfire. We also watched a plethora of chick-flicks and then, in turn, getting mad at the cheesy story laid out in the movies. We played basketball, made delicious food and overall, bonded with one another and had time to get to know one another on a deeper level. I enjoyed the weekend very much, and I am a firm believer that the staff, with us, were the perfect fit for the position and role they had to play on the trip. I feel as if the trip was necessary for me to continue advancing through my process and for that, I am grateful.



By: Connor C

On a brisk Friday morning, nine other students and I piled into one of the vans and set out on a six-hour car ride to the mountain ranges. After several hours of sleeping on each other in the vehicle, we arrived at our campsite. It had a big fire pit and a dirt path that overlooked the river. Two of the students grilled burgers for everybody that night while we sat around the campfire enjoying ourselves. The next morning, we made eggs and bacon for breakfast. We packed lunches with all kinds of snacks that Matt brought for us, filled up our CamelBak bladders, and set out on a hike. We climbed to the top of a very steep mountain and ate lunch on top. When we came back down, the sun was setting, and we all gathered around the campfire to listen to one of our staff's life story. He shared his experience, strength, and hopes with us about how alcoholism ruined his life and how recovery came in and helped him get back on his feet. It was super awesome to hear more about his background since I wasn't super close to him before this



Level 1 Retreat



Left to Right: Therapist Matt H, Max C, Connor C, Justin S, Xavier A, Brady G, Jack J, Nate T, Ben B, Andrew S, Alex G

trip and I felt like I could relate a lot to his childhood. On Sunday morning, we began to build our sweat lodge, the main point of this retreat. All of the students and I weren't quite sure how we were going to "build" a sweat lodge out of logs and burlap. None of us had experience with architecture or construction. The staff gave us no hints or advice; it was all up to us to build our own sweat lodge. We ended up putting three big logs in the ground to serve as posts and then wrapped the burlap around it. We dug a hole in the ground inside the lodge and dropped rocks that had been heating up on the fire in it. We all gathered into the sweat and sat in a circle around the pit. We began sharing vulnerable things from our lives that we wanted to let go. After we shared, we poured water on the burning hot rocks which released steam representing the things we wanted to let go of from our past. This exercise honestly helped me open up so much and let go of some things I regretted

from my life. I shared an experience that I had never told anyone before, and I felt like I got to know this group of guy's way better than I did before. We went swimming in the freezing river after to "cleanse" ourselves and had a relaxed last night roasting s'mores around the campfire. Overall, this has been my favorite level retreat I've been on and learned a lot about myself and my peers at the Ranch. I also just had a ton of fun with some people I wasn't too close with. I felt I had gained a deeper relationship with Matt, the therapist. I had not spent too much time with him back on the Ranch since he wasn't my therapist. I would see him occasionally and say hi now and then, but I never had an actual conversation with him. After this retreat, I got to know so much more about him and goof off and have some fun with him. Even though we all had to put in some physical work, we all got the chance to sit back, have some laughs, and eat a ton of good food together.

Retired Professionals Retreat

By: Robert H

The Retired Professionals Retreat was fun and entertaining. Often, people think of AA retreats as dull, with too many groups, but I think this week proved that there is some fun to have also. The event was in Prescott, and the drive up to the campsite was fun. I love long car rides because you can sleep the whole time and I think that's just about what everybody did. When we arrived, we got checked into our rooms and the rules were laid out. We had the freedom to roam and do what we pleased. We could play basketball, volleyball, ping-pong, pool, or even go on a hike. Around an hour after getting settled in, one of the life coaches, Sean, took

Ian and me on a nature hike. It wasn't long at all, but the environment was very different from the Ranch. We found this beautiful pond area. Sean said that every year he comes here, and there are always lots of frogs. So the hunt to find frogs began, and in the process, we found something a bit bigger. We had been looking for frogs and walking around the same area for a while, only to see a snake hiding in a rock. We were all horrified, but in the end, we walked away with some cool pictures and a neat experience. It turns out that while we were gone, other students had also found a few other snakes around the campsite. So it made for an overall weird adventure.

Other than the fun that we had, there were many profound groups and discussions. I learned a lot about myself and one of the messages that I heard and would like to keep passing on is love. If you replace the word "God" in the serenity prayer with "love," it might make sense to you. "Love grants me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." There were many other small quotes and facts like this one that changed my perception on some of my struggles, but I think this was the best one. Everybody seemed to enjoy some of the groups, and I think everybody had a good time.



Karsten H
3-4

Noah H
3-7

Brice S
3-11

Matt T
3-12

Connor C
3-12

Zack B
3-18

Jack J
3-29

Nate T
3-31

Carver K
4-3

Jack C
4-18

Andrew S
4-24

Tonio S
4-28

John E
5-3

Luke W
5-7

Trey P
5-23

Joey V
5-23

Tyler H
6-11

Henry F
6-18

***Thank you to all who contributed to this
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In Balance Ranch Academy
San Pedro Valley Academy
6107 E. Grant Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85712
www.inbalranch.com