



# Flying H Youth Ranch

370 Flying H Loop  
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Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Faith Mission

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Dear Friends,

Occasionally, young men graduate from the program here at the Flying H who have set a high standard for the other young men in residence. Anthony has been one of these. In fact, he graduated from both the program and high school on October 17. Because his accolades were many, his graduation celebration was one of the lengthiest in Flying H history. Anthony also achieved (Ringer) the highest rank possible in our program—a position not held since 2003. Since the rank is achieved through performance as well as stiff staff and parental evaluations (which focus on student attitudes) the position is coveted (because of the accompanying privileges) but rarely attained. Anthony reached this ranking two months in a row before his graduation.

During his last week, in an effort to put his months here in perspective, Anthony reflected on his life in a written testimony. With his permission, we are printing the following excerpts:

I grew up in a Christian home for fifteen years; and from the looks of it, my parents loved each other very much. We did all the typical American family pastimes such as vacations, picnics, and family gatherings. We functioned, had some fights here and there, but nothing serious—anything you would find in a home with three kids.

In August of 2007, however, my mother decided that family life was not her thing. Abandoning us, she fled to Maine with another man. I witnessed my mother's deception; I saw her commit adultery behind my father's back; yet remained silent, thinking I was protecting my father.

Because of this betrayal, I sowed bitterness inside my heart, and it grew into a deeply embedded thorn which constantly reminded me that I could trust no one. If my mother was capable of such deception and malice, then what stops anyone else from doing likewise. Soon I developed my own philosophy that, "Everyone has a knife." Since I decided that I could trust myself and myself alone, I quickly slipped from my faith and gave way to temptations that I never would have struggled with before. I chose to steal because I felt that my mother had stolen something from me and my family. I was first caught at a local grocery store and charged with petty theft. Then I took my best friend's mother's car and wrapped it around a telephone pole. Finally I was arrested for grand theft auto and charged with four felonies. I didn't care, however, and I didn't want my father's help with the court and paperwork. I only wanted to serve my time and get right back to the streets. My dad did something new the last time; instead of bailing me out, taking me home, and giving hours of lectures and hard labor, he brought me here—to the Flying H Youth Ranch.

When I heard of the ranch, my initial thought was a summer program—then I'd be back home. When I arrived and saw boys with books and backpacks, I soon realized how much longer I'd be here. I despised the deception of my father and held bitterness against him for lying to me. I felt he had done just what my mother did, and I truly believed I was alone and could never trust anyone.

My first half of the program was a façade—I was determined to just do what I was told and get by. I did not want anyone to know my troubles and my sob-stories; I just wanted to be left alone. This plan worked for a while, even ranking high. The biggest turning point for me was the December 2008 home leave. It was the only time I had been allowed to go home for a leave, and the only reason was I had a required court appearance. The morning of my hearing, I awoke shaking, fearing the possible outcomes of that day. In the courtroom, however, no book was thrown, no punishments were imposed. I received grace upon grace. My father sacrificed next to all for the freedom of his boy, and yet I did not accept this merciful act; I still felt betrayed.

I came back to the Flying H a wreck. I let my feelings come out instead of hiding them inside. I didn't care what people thought, and I didn't care that I was splitting wood and carrying rocks. In essence I was winning because outside I could be alone and not have to deal with people. It wasn't until after the Father-son Campout that I realized how broken I was and that I wasn't going to be fixed by my own power. During the campout there were numerous lessons on a father's love and the responsibilities of a son. I was convicted and torn inside from all the wrong I had done to my father. I was taking out my anger against my mother on him and blaming him for my own mistakes, and I was bitter over him saving me instead of letting me fall. I finally saw that my father loved me more than himself, and that he sacrificed his own comfort for my pain. He was always the one holding his hand out to me in my time of need.

Apology after apology followed the campout. I decided that I was going to be the son I needed to be instead of the man that I thought I was. My rank went up, my grades were good, and the respect I had for and from the staff was true and sincere. I didn't fake it anymore because I wanted it to be real. I was tired of lying and faking my way through the program, constantly worried about whether or not the staff would find out. I let God take the reins and He showed me His guiding hand.

The last few months of this program have been some of the happiest months of my entire life. I haven't counted the days or lost sleep from being anxious. I have enjoyed my time here and found that the more I gave, the more I received. The Flying H Youth Ranch has changed my life in such enormous ways. I have found peace in these halls, and my spirit has been renewed tenfold. I have re-established a strong and healthy relationship with my father; my older sister and I are both loving siblings and the best of friends; and I look forward to being a positive and firm-footed role model for my little brother.

Because of my stay at the Flying H, I have had time to study my past and have hope for tomorrow. By seeing both the achievements and the mistakes, I have learned that you cannot become bitter because of your past but you should embrace it and use it in your future.

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***Psalm 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; (or river).***

Yes the mountain did slip into the river and we were temporarily evacuated from the property, however God is good and we were able to return to the Ranch later that Sunday evening with power outage and river across our driveway. Three weeks later we're back to our version of normal. We covet your continued prayers for the staff and boys here at the Ranch. Pictures tell a great story, you can see pictures on the internet at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot/collections/72157622689658122/>

**Praises: New baby to the Carlile family, Olivia Grace Carlile, Oct 13<sup>th</sup>  
The Lord has kept us safe in a very precarious situation.**

**Prayer Requests: The Hunting's are expecting any day now the new arrival of a baby girl  
Please pray for Inquiries / Intakes of new boys and their families into the program  
Our Lodge could use a new roof & We are still asking for funds for a new 15p van**

**In His Care,**

*Steve Alumbaugh*

**Steve Alumbaugh / Administrator  
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