



A View From the Trail...

**MERRY CHRISTMAS &
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

The Victor Valley Child Abuse Task Force was formed in 1982 with the mission of stemming a rising tide of child abuse in the High Desert of San Bernardino County in Southern California. In 1992, the name was changed to the Happy Trails Children's Foundation, to reflect the participation and support of Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, King of the Cowboys and Queen of the West.

The Happy Trails Children's Foundation built the Cooper Home in Apple Valley, CA, the long-time home of Roy and Dale, to provide a safe haven for children-at-risk who have been severely abused and/or neglected. A generous bequest from the estate of George Harold Cooper provided the financial base for the home and a house donated by Dr. and Mrs. Philip Marsden was moved to a 40-acre Apple Valley site donated by Tom and Lynn Hrubik. The house was remodeled to become the Foundation office and two cottages, a cafeteria building and two support services buildings were constructed to house and provide services to the children. At the time we opened the doors in 1997, we had boys and girls. It didn't take us long to realize that having boys and girls on the same campus didn't work. At the time, there was a greater need for a home for boys. Today, the Cooper Home serves as a long-term residential care and treatment center for severely abused boys. The day to day operations of the Cooper Home are provided by Trinity Youth Services, a national non-profit child care organization with more than 40 years' experience operating children's programs in group homes and foster family agencies. Happy Trails Children's Foundation in partnership with Trinity Youth Services continually operates the Cooper Home at maximum capacity with 44 boys between the ages of 12 and 18, plus we often have a lengthy waiting list! These are boys who have been so severely abused, Child Protective Services has removed them from their homes and the courts send them to us for a very intensive treatment program of group and individual therapy. Since the Cooper Home opened in 1997, more than 1,460 children have received shelter, care and treatment services. Situated on 40 acres of land in the High Desert, the Cooper Home is surrounded by panoramic vistas of snowcapped mountains and natural desert terrain under healthy, smog-free skies. Our pleasant cottages and well-manicured outdoor play areas provide a peaceful, serene environment in which children can begin the healing process.

The problem of child abuse is a very serious problem that is growing in epidemic proportions. Throughout the past few months, newspapers and news broadcasts have been filled with tragic stories of child abuse, kidnappings, beatings, severe neglect and death. Almost one-in-ten children nationwide are victims of brutal child abuse and the number of severe cases appears to be increasing at an alarming rate. There is an urgent need for the services provided by the Cooper Home.

Research has shown that children who are abused often become abusers. They tend to repeat behaviors they learned as victims of abuse. Our primary goal is to break that chain of abuse! We believe that every child should be able to grow up in a loving and caring environment, free from fear and abuse.

We deeply appreciate your loyal support in the past and we look forward to your continued gifts at this critical time in the lives of the children we serve. No matter how successful our fund-raising efforts, we are never able to raise enough funds to meet all the needs of the children in our care. Funding for the foundation comes from individuals and organizations through tax-deductible gifts, donations, Grants, appreciated stocks, bonds, real estate, and the donation of other assets such as art, jewelry, firearms, coins, and other collectibles. You receive a charitable deduction for the fair market value at the time of the gift. Planned gifts through wills and living trusts in support of the objectives of the foundation are also appreciated.

Year-end giving is as easy as 1 2 3. 1. Make a charitable gift through cash, check, or even your credit card (and possibly earn valuable points!). 2. Take a tax deduction on your 2019 income tax return. 3. Know that your valuable gift is making a difference in the life of a child. Check with your tax professional about the advantages of charitable giving and give me a call if I can answer any questions. Thanks for your support! **DONATE NOW**

Joel Dortch
Executive Director