# Promoting World Peace
## one pooch at a time



MAY 16
Polished Pooches
for World Peace
A Youth Fundraiser

M'Lynn, Dan & Shelly Gilliam



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By Monica Kaplan

Talk about your win/win situation. One extremely dynamic mother and daughter duo are combining teaching area teens a bevy of business and fundraising skills while raising money to promote world peace. Oh, and throw in giving a whole lot of dogs their baths at the same time. Management guru Stephen Covey would be proud.

Shelly Gilliam and her daughter M'Lynn are entering their third year of offering a day-long dog-wash fundraiser at their business, the Doggie Dude Ranch, and the dividends just keep bubbling over.

This year, their "Polished Pooches for Peace," to be held Saturday, May 16, will train about 20 teens all the ins and outs of organizing a fundraiser and providing customer service as they wash, groom and play with about 60 dogs assembly-line style. At the end of the day, the high schoolers will have completed 16 hours of detailed instruction in how to implement such an event, and also raised money toward the goal of building a school for girls in Pakistan through the nonprofit Central Asia Institute.

everybody working together just like it trained," says M'Lynn, a junior at Prescott High School. Working on the event alongside her mother since she was a freshman, the bright 17 year old plans to lead the training of her peers by the time her senior year rolls around.

And the breadth of the business curriculum presented to these teens is nothing to bark at. Shelly and her husband, Dan, are passionate about operating their pet kennel with the highest standards of business practices; they also want to teach that philosophy to the younger generation.

"The guiding principle of the Doggie Dude Ranch team is to encourage and support learning in all aspects of life, but especially in how we strive to make the world a better place," says Shelly. Their desire to design a kennel-related event that would also serve as a teaching opportunity for teens has netted results larger than they ever anticipated.

"One of the first things I do in the training is break down the cliques," Shelly shares, her enthusiasm for mentoring teens very evident.

"You feel really good when the day other at school, because we're all about comes and you see community."

Just as she opens her two-day training by first breaking down social barriers, Shelly also gives the youths a crash course in a systems approach to running a dogwash.

"I use McDonalds as an example," she begins; "it's the ultimate system made profitable." She then leads a discussion on how the group will organize their own system of assembly-line dog washing, and the topics just get more multifaceted from there: goal-setting, customer service, professional behavior, quality control, sales training, job duties, safety and clean-up.

Shelly smiles as she admits the two-day curriculum is "absolutely too much" for a teen to take in; "each kid is going to take something different home with them." She is satisfied in the knowledge that the experience will change them: "they will learn, stretch and grow, and go out and make the world a better place for themselves and others."

Speaking of that, the dog washing event this year will be raising money and awareness for a cause close to M'Lynn's heart – the work of Greg Mortenson and his Central Asia Istitute.

"I want these kids to say hi to each



M'Lynn was touched by a book she read last summer by Mortenson, "Three Cups of Tea," about his experience being nursed back to health by some Pakistani villagers after a near-fatal mountain climbing accident. Afterwards, he wanted to give back and "gently discourage terrorism" by building schools there, she says. Sixty have been built so far. M'Lynn hopes to raise $15,000 by the end of her senior year, which will build and supply one school.

To sign your dog up for the "Polished Pooches for World Peace" event, May 16 at the Doggie Dude Ranch, call 710-7839, or go to www.doggiedude. com.