

The Ring Lake Carillon

Ring Lake Ranch • Dubois, Wyoming Spring 2010

An ecumenical retreat center • "renewal in a sacred wilderness"

"Speak with the earth, and she shall teach you." -- Job 12:8



Our Holy Longing

by Carl Koch, Director

When we declare our mission to be "renewal in a sacred wilderness," we are inviting ourselves to be "restored to peace – and filled with gratitude." We are inviting ourselves to break out of the dreariness that can creep into our lives when, as Annie Dillard said, we "diddle around making itsy-bitsy friends and meals and journeys for itsy-bitsy years on end . . . then to sulk along the rest of your days on the edge of rage."

We make our first step toward renewal by choosing to come to the Ranch. We give ourselves space and time to look at the lives we are making with each decision, each day. Climbing into the saddle on an unfamiliar horse to ride the Two Splash Trail, hiking up Little Whiskey, conversing with enlightening presenters, or entering into discussion with new people offer us chances to discover once again our potentialities – and this may be the core of renewal. In Self-Renewal, John Gardner describes renewal as the person's "exploration of the full range of his or her own potentialities. And by potentialities I mean not just skills, but the full range of capacities for sensing, wondering, learning, understanding, loving and aspiring."

Having time and space in this sacred wilderness helps us renew our soul, that life principle or impulse that gives us energy and provides the glue that holds us together. Wilderness has always been the refuge of those seeking to reclaim their souls. In wilderness, we can hear the voice of our true self, the voice of wisdom and wonder, which we "don't hear at all if selfhood has stuffed your ears./And it's difficult to hear anything anyway, through all the traffic, and ambition" as Mary Oliver declares.

Rather than settling for the itsy-bitsy, the unexamined life not worth living or the un-lived life not worth examining, Annie Dillard challenges: "I won't have it. The world is wilder than that in all directions, more dangerous and bitter, more extravagant and bright. We are making hay when we should be making whoopee." In Torrey Valley, on a horse or on a mountainside, the world is wilder and more interesting, brighter and grander – room for our potentialities to take the stage and shake our hands, maybe for the first time in a long while.

At the Ranch, we don't have to be minister or priest, designer or teacher. We are invited to be present, to be still, to learn and to

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Spirit Poem

by Celia Jacobs – RLR guest

*I think the big-horn sheep
may have restored my spirit
when they sauntered down the hill
curious and eager to graze
babies in tow.*

*Or maybe it was the short-legged horse
who could never seem to keep up
when she cantored briskly
to nudge her nose on her leader
steadfast to assert her place.*

*Or perhaps, the Absarokas –
God's enticing playground
when they begged me to
climb, climb, climb –
sliding on rocks and mud
gripping sagebrush and cacti
showing me majesty from all angles.*

*Then again, there was the excitement of a child
on the verge of her twelfth birthday
drinking in the friendship of creatures,
young and old
running with abandon and reminding me
how to play
and how to have joy.*

*Or was it the sharing
with old friends and new
the fellowship, the honesty, the fun,
the wisdom
the chats that knitted our collective
searching
for intimacy and meaning?*

*I know not the precise trigger that revived me
nor the mysterious formula
that made my spirit whole;*

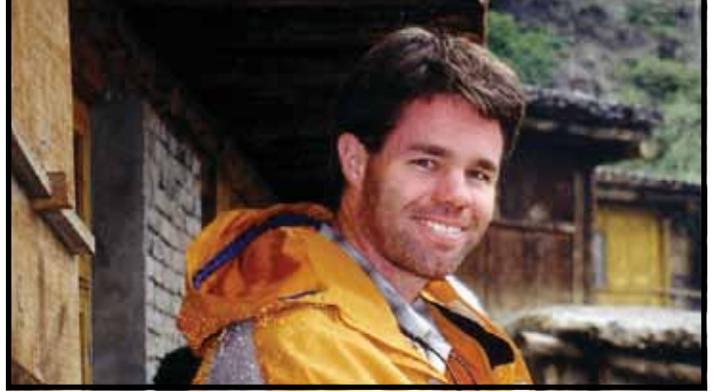
*But I do know that it was God who
orchestrated the healing,
restored me to peace –
and filled me with gratitude.*

Remembering Henry Everding

February 18, 2010 marked the fifth anniversary of Henry Everding's death from a freak rock-fall while mountain-climbing in Patagonia. At ten, Henry came to the Ranch as a guest, beginning a thirty year relationship during which he served as a junior wrangler, wrangler, President of the Board, and veterinarian to our horses. Last year, the fund to support the horse program named in Henry's honor reached its goal. We thought it only fitting to remember Henry on this anniversary and say thank you to him and to all those who honor this good man.

Henry's passion for Ring Lake Ranch began in August 1976 when he and his sisters (Lisa, Linda, Kelly) accompanied me to the Ranch when Maggie invited me to lead a couple of sessions. Henry was ten years old at the time. The next summer, he asked Maggie to become a junior staffer. She said he had to wait until he was twelve. Even so, she relented slightly, allowing Henry to join the junior staffers in June of 1978 when he was almost twelve.

When he and I arrived at the Ranch and discovered the bunkhouse where he was to stay, I was more concerned than Henry. The huge window of the primitive building was covered only by mosquito netting. We quickly drove to a lumberyard in Dubois to purchase clear plastic to cover the window. Even though the bunkhouse had no heat or electricity at the time, Henry would suffer less from the cold, sometimes wet, evenings. When I was leaving the Ranch, Henry stood alone on the dining room's back porch with his long golden hair and his wonderful, expansive happy smile waving good bye. Tears in my eyes, I waved and wondered if my little boy would be alright and what his future would be. I need not have worried. Ring Lake Ranch became a great part of his life for almost 30 years. And, needless to say, I



couldn't imagine then that I would be saying a final good bye to thirty-eight year old Henry when I saw him for the last time in Punta Arenas, Chile in February 2005. – Ed Everding

In 1988, my first summer on the junior staff of Ring Lake Ranch, I was exhilarated mostly because of the opportunity to spend hours every day around the horses. The senior staff supported my 13-year-old enthusiasm, and I learned a lot. One of the best teachers was Henry Everding, who had been in my shoes ten years before. He taught me to crack a bullwhip, make a bridle out of rope, swim bareback, throw hay bales and, most important, how to dance the Salty Dog Rag. He was my idol, not only because of his work on the Ranch, but also because he was on his way to becoming a veterinarian, the profession I aspired to. My friendship with Henry continued until the date of his death. He wrote my letter of recommendation to veterinary school. He and I provided routine veterinary care for the Ranch's horses, and it was on his request that I joined the Board of Directors.

Five years ago, we knew that we wanted to provide a way for Henry to continue caring for the Ranch's horses. The Henry Fund was begun, and today it is doing what Henry cannot. It helps feeds the horses, pays for their veterinary care, and brings new horses to the herd. Because of the generous donations of so many, the horses will feel Henry's love for years to come. – Naomi Petersen Hoyer, DVM



Our New Addition

By Terri Schulz, RLR Board President

When you come to the Ranch this summer, you will notice a beautiful new building near the entrance. This addition to Cabin B is the home of our facilities manager. In the past, volunteer caretakers have stayed over the winter. As the Ranch's buildings have aged and the Torrey Valley has become busier year round, the Ring Lake Ranch Board realized that good stewardship of the land and the buildings require a year round staff presence.

While some of you might be sad to no longer be able to stay in Cabin B, the Board felt that creating an addition was cost effective and the best choice given its location. The gate is highly visible from this cabin protecting Ring Lake Ranch. This cabin has easy access to the road and the well. Fellow Board member and architect, Roger Stout, designed the addition and oversaw the project. Ben and Amanda Verheul and future facilities managers will have a wonderful and secure place to live and steward this property.

The Ring Lake Ranch Carillon

Published twice yearly by
Ring Lake Ranch

Designed by
Roderick Robertson
Selected photographs by
Richard Bondi, Ray Guntzelman,
Joyce Heil, Lida Hill, Carl Koch,
Bill Krasean, Anne Muller, Sean
Roche and Terri Schulz.

RLR Board of Directors

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Ed Everding, Ken Fuller
Beth Klucher, Kathy Leithner
Roger Strout, Katherine Turpin

Ring of Friends

All our generous donors for 2009 are listed here: HEF means a gift in honor of Henry Everding to the Henry Everding Memorial Fund. The Jeff Lowrance, Don Miller, & Tom Sebbins Fund was begun by the Faith, Fellowship, & Fly-fishing group to provide scholarships. Please let us know of any mistakes or omissions – for which we apologize. May all of our donors be richly blessed!

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Virginia Lee
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of Sean Roche, our
web designer, and
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Carillon designer.



Our Holy Longing ... continued from page 1

stand in awe. If renewal of soul implies learning and stepping out of automatic patterns, then each of the sessions will offer a special slant, shared insight, and important questions. In June, teacher and Pulitzer-Prize winning playwright Maggie Edson will help us look at what happens when our longings of the soul become our walking papers.

July begins with historian and novelist Margaret Coel inviting us to look at the world through the enlightening lense of Arapaho spirituality. Then Amy Oden, Dean of Wesley School of Theology, will lead us to consider a life of hospitality – stretching ourselves out of our comfort zone to welcome strangers into our lives and communities. Then at the end of the month, Steve Tipton will offer us a chance to delve into our convictions and doubts about religion and politics and discover more about how we co-create and contest who we are through body politics.

In August, we'll revisit that persistent question of redemption by walking with renowned author and bishop Will Willimon through some stories by Flannery O'Connor. Then singer-songwriter Carrie Newcomer will offer us the chance to enter our transformative stories and enjoy vibrant music too. Scholar of comparative religions, Jacob Kinnard then leads us in asking why comparing religions matter: What can we learn from other traditions? How do the differences enlighten us too? Next, for better or worse, Mary (Magdalene) became a "hot topic" with The Da Vinci Code. Ann Brock will introduce us to the real Mary of Magdala, and the rich spiritualities of Peter and Paul – three apostles, three spiritualities. And, finally, Candler emeritus professor Rod Hunter leads us on a recovery of hope, a challenging virtue so important for restoring our souls.

At the end of Four Quartets, T.S. Eliot writes:

With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And we know the place for the first time

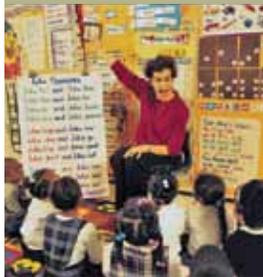
.....

And all shall be well and

All manner of things shall be well.

In reality, the exploring, learning and wonder that happen at the Ranch lead us back to the spirit that nourishes each of us, but is easy to lose amidst the "traffic, and ambition." Rediscovering that spirit can lead us to say with Julian of Norwich, T.S. Eliot, and Celia Jacobs, "And all shall be well."

Ring Lake Ranch



June 13-19 Margaret Edson Inside Out

Inside out; upside down; thinking and writing; simplicity and complications; Jesus' shoes: what happens when our longings become our walking papers? Maggie will explore four topics: the relation of speech to text; the relation of resolve to action; things that are worth doing badly; and shoe-shopping in Sephoris with Jesus. **Margaret Edson** was born in Washington, DC and between earning degrees in history and literature worked in the cancer and AIDS inpatient unit of a research hospital. *Wit*, her play, received the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1999. The HBO production won the Emmy Award for best film in 2001. *Wit* has received hundreds of productions in dozens of languages. Maggie Edson has been an elementary school teacher for seventeen years, in Washington, DC, and Atlanta.



July 11-17 Margaret Coel Arapahos, the Spirituality of a Plains Indian Tribe

Today the Arapahos remain a vibrant people with a rich culture and ancient spiritual beliefs. They occupy the nearby Wind River Reservation. They have been sustained by a rich spirituality handed down through the generations. The week-long session will focus on the way in which Arapaho spirituality is related to the people's history and to the landscape of the Great Plains, as well as the way in which many Arapahos accept Christian teachings while not abandoning their own ancient beliefs. **Margaret Coel** is the author of fifteen books about the Arapaho people, including *Chief Left Hand*, a history of the tribe and a biography of one of their leaders as their way of life on the Great Plains was coming to an end. *Chief Left Hand* was awarded the best non-fiction book of the year by the National Federation of Press Women. Coel is also the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Wind River mystery novels set among the Arapahos on the Wind River Reservation. She is a five-time winner of the Colorado Book Award, and her novel, *The Spirit Woman*, won the Willa (Cather) Award for the best novel of the West.



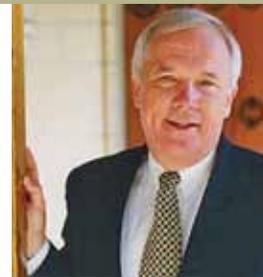
July 18-24 Amy Oden God's Welcome, Our Welcome

Jesus said, "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." We will focus on the crucial place of strangers—in our communities, in our families, in ourselves, and in God—as sources of grace and renewal. Voices and practices from our ancient Christian family will companion us as we explore welcoming the stranger in our own lives and communities today. **Amy Oden** is Professor of History of Christianity at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. Most of her work has been an effort to make ancient voices, especially women's, accessible to current audiences. Her recent scholarship has focused on the radical practice of hospitality in early Christianity and its challenge for communities today.



July 25-31 Steve Tipton God Goes to Washington -- American Religion and Politics Today

What is the role of religion in American public life? Tocqueville's vivid picture of a "democratic and republican Christianity" revealed Americans' religion as "the first of their political institutions" in 1830. Is this picture a museum piece in a public square now crowded by religious lobbies and parachurch partisans engaged in culture wars, or is Obama redrawing it in the progressive image of prophetic peace and justice? Let's show and tell, delve into our convictions and doubts, and discover more about how we co-create and contest who we are through body politics. **Steven M. Tipton** teaches sociology and religion at Emory University and its Candler School of Theology. He is the author of *Public Pulpits: Methodists and Mainline Churches in the Moral Argument of Public Life*, and co-author of *Habits of the Heart* and *The Good Society*. He has hiked in the Sierras, played semi-professional baseball in California, and worked in Harlem as a murder investigator for the New York State Superior Court.



Aug. 1-7 Bishop Will Willimon Haunted by God with Flannery O'Connor

Flannery O'Connor's stories provide some of the most challenging and invigorating explorations of Christian redemption in literature. In this retreat we will read some of her most revealing stories and discuss them, as well as view a couple of films of her work. We will immerse ourselves in her unique vision of Christian redemption and atonement and ponder the implications of her work for contemporary believers. **Will Willimon** is a prolific author and preacher. He is Bishop of the United Methodist Church in the North Alabama Conference. His book, *Reading with Deeper Eyes* is an exploration of the life of fiction and the life of faith. He is speaker at many conferences and has served on the faculties of universities in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Germany. For twenty years he was Dean of the Chapel at Duke University.

2010 Schedule of Programs



August 8-14 Carrie Newcomer Before and After Creatively Exploring Our Transformative Stories

This session explores how our personal stories of hope, struggle, and transformation connect us to the larger spiritual and cultural story. We will consider the sacred in the ordinary, giving special attention to daily transformations, as well as reflect upon the wisdom and opportunity gained in crisis. We will utilize music, writing exercises, deep listening, and discussion to identify the important stories of our lives, and how we as individuals can participate in new stories of hope. **Carrie Newcomer** has been described as "a soaring songstress" by *Billboard*, "a rising star" by *The Wall Street Journal*, and a "prairie mystic" by *The Boston Globe*. The Indiana native sings of the small joys and pains in life, emphasizing the little moments that are often taken for granted. Her albums include *Regulars & Refugees*, *The Age of Possibility*, *The Gathering of Spirits*, and *The Geography of Light*. She toured with Alison Krauss and Union Station. In 2009 Carrie received Folkwax Artist and Album of the Year, and was featured in the Emmy nominated *Wilderness Plots* PBS Special.



August 15 – 21 Jacob Kinnard Why Comparing Religions Matters

Why it is crucial, especially now, to grapple with religions other than our own. How do we go about learning another religion without "translating" it into our own. How do we understand not just what is similar, but also what is different? Why does attention to difference matter? These are some of the issues we will grapple as we look at four non-Christian traditions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. **Jacob N. Kinnard** teaches courses on the religious traditions of India, comparative religion, and theoretical and methodological issues in the study of religion at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. He is the author of *Imaging Wisdom: Seeing and Knowing in the Art of Indian* and *The Emergence of Buddhism*, and co-editor of *Constituting Communities: Theravada Traditions in South and Southeast Asia*.



August 22 – 28 Ann Brock Peter, Paul, and Mary (Magdalene), the Early Years: Three Apostles, Three Spiritualities

Christianity at its best is seen in the lives of believers who emulate the spirituality of the Jesus we know from the Gospels. How is the presentation of Jesus in these writings seen in the legacies of his disciples, especially Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene? Does Paul's spirituality stifle or support women? How do the depictions of Peter – particularly in relation to Mary Magdalene-- affect Church politics? Finally, Mary Magdalene has been portrayed as repentant sinner, the first apostle, and even as the wife of Jesus in books such as the *Da Vinci Code*, but who was she really and what does her spirituality teach us? **Ann Graham Brock** is Associate Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. Her most recent monograph is entitled: *Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle: The Struggle for Authority*. Ann has also appeared on the History Channel in its presentation of *The Twelve Apostles*, the Discovery Channel in *The Real Da Vinci Code*.



Aug. 29-Sept. 4 Rodney Hunter Searching for Hope

In this retreat, we'll be searching for a realistic sense of hope for today's world and for ourselves, rooted in faith. How many times have we asked ourselves how justified and realistic is it to "hope in God" in the face of personal problems, or in relation to the urgent and overwhelming social and environmental dangers confronting global humanity? As one who asks these questions a lot myself, I am looking forward to an open discussion with seminar participants, and to sharing, through informal presentations, some fresh, contemporary theological and psychological angles that offer, I believe, some real help and possibility for us all as we attempt to answer these great questions. **Rodney Hunter** retired a few years ago from teaching pastoral theology at Emory University, but maintains an active academic and professional life of research, writing, speaking, and consultation. He is the author of numerous academic articles and the editor of two books, including the *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*. He is a dedicated student of classic piano and, with his wife Ann, a long time Ring Lake enthusiast who has also led several previous seminars at the Ranch.



September 4-10 Flyfishing and Theology

FAITH - FELLOWSHIP – FLYFISHING Though not a regular seminar session, guests are welcome to register with **Fred Webb** for the 12th year of this program at Ring Lake Ranch. (540) 962-1300

*For more details
check our website:
www.ringlake.org*



2010 Staff Update

- Marty Dorst & Audra Mullineux will be wrangling again, teaching the fine art of equine enjoyment;
- Karen Marshall & Amanda Verheul will be spinning culinary magic again. They will be joined by Glenna Bell Orman of Burnet, TX; from a fifth-generation ranch family, Glenna worked in the corporate world for most of her career before deciding to move into ranch life again; we are delighted to have her join us.
- Our new hike leader/housekeeper will be Dawn Sample. She's backpacked and hiked many national parks, just finished her masters in theology at Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, and was a guest at RLR in 2008. Welcome back, Dawn.
- Ben Verheul, Facilities Manager, will make sure the water is running, the toilets are flushing, the buildings are in fine shape;
- Joyce Heil, associate director, has stayed in practice for reiki, has new treasures to sell in the gift shop, and will do the other thousand jobs she has, and
- I will be directing again, trying to keep the finances on track, housing squared away, etc. and enjoying the sessions and the pleasure of your company

Help! We Need Your Vintage Photos

If you have had a chance to check out the photo Gallery on the website, you will have noticed a specific gallery for "vintage" pictures – that is, photos from 1966 to 2000. Right now only two photos are posted. We have received some from the 1990s, but would like to include photos from the Ranch's first 25 years.

So, if you have photos from those early years and would like to share them, you can do so in a couple of ways:

- If you can scan them, please send the photos via email (carl@ringlake.org) or mail us a CD.
- Or mail the photos to us so that we can scan and post them (we will send them back to you). They can be mailed to: Ring Lake Ranch, PO Box 446, La Crosse, WI 54602-0446.

Scholarships Available

Partial scholarships are available to people needing assistance to attend programs at the Ranch. While we strive to keep the cost of attending the Ranch as affordable as possible, we do not want the cost to keep folks, especially new participants, from attending a session.

In particular, two Linda Scholarships of \$500 are awarded to help introduce new, young clergy families to Ring Lake Ranch. Applicants should be persons in ministry with a young family who have never been to the Ranch. These scholarships are funded by a generous donor wishing to remain anonymous.

Please direct your questions to or ask for our simple application from Carl Koch at carl@ringlake.org or phone 888.458.5253.

Cooking at the Ranch

Associate director, Joyce Heil, and second season cook, Amanda Verheul, have compiled a book of favorite recipes from the Ranch. More than 300 recipes offer cooks all the best dishes that guests have enjoyed over the years: from Joyce's great granola to Martha's brined pork to Susan's taco soup to Beth's pumpkin pie cake.

Cost \$10.00 + \$3.00 mailing; pay by check or Visa/Mastercard.

You can order the book by emailing Joyce at joyce@ringlake.org or by phoning us at 888.458.5253. Soon you may order on-line through the website.

The cookbooks make great gifts. Of course, proceeds from the sale help support the Ranch too. Bon appetit!

Your Continual Generosity

by Nathan Bachtell, Ring Lake Ranch Board

The events of the first few months of 2010 have elicited emotions of pity and sadness in many of us. The tragic earthquake in Haiti, just off our Florida shore, reminds us of how important our sense of philanthropy is to the fabric of life that surrounds us. In the New Orleans Saints, we saw the once dim light of hope from a devastating hurricane shine bright on a community in just four short years. Last but not least, the Olympic Games brought the magic of international camaraderie and peace into our living rooms every night for the last few weeks of February. For me these events and emotions are reminders of how important it is to maintain our sense of community and charity in an uncertain world.

If you are reading this message, chances are Ring Lake Ranch serves as a place where you come to be renewed, to strengthen your faith, to cherish moments with old friends and discover new ones, and to spend time reflecting from high on a ridge or mountaintop about how blessed we are as a community.

As I have done in years past, I ask that you please continue to support the Ranch as much as you are able through one time or annual contributions. Any amount helps us. We also encourage you to consider Ring Lake Ranch when planning for the disposition of your estate. By including a charitable bequest in your will or revocable trust, we can provide for the Ranch's future for generations to come. Ranch staff or I can help you with this process if you so chose.

With warm regards, thank you.

2010 Registration

2010 RATES

All rates are per person and based on double/multiple occupancy

Includes lodging * meals * seminars * horseback riding * guided hiking * boating. No charge for children 12 & under.

Scholarships are available: Contact – Carl Koch at mailing address below or carl@ringlake.org

ADULT FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Basic lodging with shared bath\$710
 Basic lodging with private bath..... \$795
 Larger cabin with private bath..... \$860
 Kitchenette cabin..... \$960

YOUTH FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17)..... \$545
 Child (ages 12 and under)no charge

ADULT FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Basic lodging with shared bath \$ 1250
 Basic lodging with private bath.....\$ 1400
 Larger cabin with private bath.....\$ 1500
 Kitchenette cabin.....\$ 1690

YOUTH FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17)..... \$ 940
 Child (ages 12 and under)no charge

All fees exclude sales & lodging taxes Daily and off-season rates are available upon request.

To reserve a private room, contact Carl or Joyce about additional fee & availability.

Receive a 10% discount on your session fees by bringing someone new to the Ranch with you. Please indicate on your registration form who the new guest is. When they register, we'll record the discount. Thank you for spreading the word about Ring Lake Ranch.

Deposit:

To hold your reservations, we request a deposit of \$235/adult and \$130/youth for 6 day sessions or \$415/adult and \$180/youth for two sessions. The deposit is refundable (less a 20% handling charge) up to 60 days in advance of the session for which you have registered. After that time, the deposit is refundable (less 20%) only if we can rebook your space in the session.

No. of Registrants:

_____ Adults @ rate _____
 _____ Youth (13-17) _____
 _____ Children(12 & under) no charge

TOTAL (without taxes) _____

Deposit Amount _____

Session

Dates _____

Registrant Name(s) _____

Names & ages of children (if applicable) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____

Cell () _____ Email _____

Accommodation preference: _____

Basic/shared bath Basic/private bath

Large/private bath Kitchenette Cabin A

Roommate preference (registering separately) _____

One bed? Two beds?

Is walking over steep or rough terrain difficult for you?

Yes No

Any other physical limitations? _____

Dietary restrictions/food allergies: _____

Will you need transportation from the airport? _____

(see spring Carillon or website for charges) _____

No Yes Jackson/Riverton

Signature _____

Date _____

We now accept Visa & Mastercard. Pay by cash or your personal check and receive a 5% discount in fees. _____

I prefer to use my (circle one) Visa MasterCard: Card # _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Return form to: _____

(Sept. 24 to May 6) (May 6 to Sept 14)

Ring Lake Ranch Ring Lake Ranch

P.O. Box 446 P.O. Box 806

La Crosse, WI 54602-0446 Dubois, WY 82513

(888) 458-5253 toll free (307) 455-2663

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Ring Lake Ranch

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La Crosse, WI

Return Service Requested

Come join us at Ring Lake Ranch for "renewal in a sacred wilderness."



"In a republic, morality is public because it has more or less good reasons and coherent ideals, truthfulness to tradition and to the present. Public life takes the form of a moral argument, a dramatic conversation. It is a forum. For religion to deserve its place in this forum, it must tell and enact sacred stories and teach universal ideals, defining what it means to be a good person, and what makes life worth living and a society worth living in and working for. It must bring these ideals to bear on particular issues, illuminating their moral meaning in the light of Scriptures, the life of Jesus, the laws of nature and the Kingdom of God. This kind of reasoned, argued, exemplified and Bible-supported moral illumination -- not electioneering and lobbying -- is what American public life needs from religion." -- Steve Tipton

Join us for Steve Tipton's session God Goes to Washington – American Religion & Politics Today from July 25-31 (see p. 4)

*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune--without the words,
And never stops at all,
And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.
I've heard it in the chilliest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.
-- Emily Dickinson*

Hope, the forgotten virtue, has been called a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19). It is the peculiar human ability to transcend the present and its limitations, a fundamental openness to new possibilities because the present time is not the only reality. And we may need the virtue of hope now more than ever.

Join us for Rodney Hunter's retreat, Searching for Hope, Aug. 29-Sept. 4 (see p. 5).

For more information about our programs and the Ranch community, please visit our website: www.ringlake.org.