



# The Ring Lake Carillon

Ring Lake Ranch • Dubois, Wyoming • Spring 2015

An ecumenical retreat center offering “renewal in sacred wilderness.”

“What does the world mean to you if you can’t trust it to go on shining when you’re not there?”

—Mary Oliver



**W**hen I became Director of the Ranch, one of the roles I took on for myself was something I call “Chief Apologist.” When my family and I came as a guests, I loved Ring Lake Ranch and the endless ways it influenced people; when I became Director I had the chance to talk about why it mattered so much. With that role in mind, I want to share an excerpt from an article I came across in *Anchor Magazine* entitled “The Activist as Contemplative: Resting for Social Change” by the Rev. Steven Bonsey. I think the article speaks to what the Ranch can mean for many of our guests:

*Many of us dream of a different world. A better world. A world of healing and reconciliation, of justice and peace. A world where people live as we are meant to live. Many dream of it. Some dedicate themselves to its realization. This dedication can offer deeply meaningful and satisfying work, but those who work for such social change, especially those in leadership positions, are vulnerable to disappointment, burn-out, cynicism, or worse. The root causes of these threats reside not only in resistance encountered outwardly, but also in the psychological and emotional programs that drive us inwardly. As such, those of us who work for a brighter future must be equipped with the world’s ancient spiritual wisdom and traditions, which offer [practices] of inward healing and transformation that can liberate us both from the domination of fear-based regimes outside us and from their corollary regimes within us. ...Their practice over time changes us—our identities and motivations become ...more*

*connected to the transcendent source of the dreams that inspire us. We come to experience the hoped-for future as a reality coming into being in and through us, here and now. We learn that we can trust this experience, and in this trust, we find deep rest.*

Ring Lake Ranch means many different things to our guests and supporters. But for those who do find themselves both driven to transform the world and caught in the almost inevitable fatigue and frustration of that work, the Ranch experience offers a crucial antidote. Many of the phrases Steven uses come to mind when I think about Ring Lake Ranch: A place of “inward healing and transformation that can liberate us,” a place “we can trust... and in this trust, we find deep rest.”

Steven talks about a specific practice he has taken up, centering prayer, as his entryway into a sense of peaceful perspective on his work. Likewise, I talk each Sunday evening at orientation about how the activities offered at the Ranch are all optional ways to find renewal and rest. To be honest, however, that sense of perspective, of “being put in our place,” isn’t really an option at Ring Lake Ranch. You can skip morning prayer, stumble past the rocks in the labyrinth, and treat every hike as a chance to get your heartrate up. But step outside and look up in the sky after a seminar, at starlight that started its journey before humans could even talk to each other. Walk past the rock behind the Ranch office, four feet in diameter and weighing hundreds of pounds, that is split clean in two from year after year of water freezing and thawing. Ride Ole, our stalwart Norwegian Fjord horse,

down the long, steep slope of the valley wall at the end of Beck’s Trail. It’s hard to imagine how a week could go by at the Ranch without encountering something to remind us that our place in the universe is not one of control or triumph, at least not every day. It’s also hard to imagine how we wouldn’t find this sense of perspective to be a good thing. To borrow a lesson taught by our friend Belden Lane a couple summers ago, places like Ring Lake Ranch help teach us what really matters, what we should love and hold close and what we should learn to release. Even if all of our work and striving is to realize the realm of God, coming out of one of the cabins to look at Middle Mountain each morning reminds us that a world of grace and beauty is not ours to build, but already exists all around us. And thank goodness for that wisdom.

If you think of Ring Lake Ranch as one big contemplative practice, then the closing paragraph of Steven’s article is a fitting description of how time at the Ranch can strengthen us for whatever our life’s work holds for us:

*...Contemplative practice... can lead us into the kind of rest that opens the eyes and ears of our hearts and allows us to experience the movement of Source. These subtle perceptions will also give us the wisdom to recognize the seasons for patient labor and the hours for decisive action. As contemplative leaders, we will be proof against the threats of cynicism and burn-out; we will be more present in our work as our authentic selves; and we will be more effective in deploying our own energy and the energy of others in welcoming the day of hope that is the harvest time.*

## Our New Board Members

The Board met in January and approved two new Board members who bring great skills and dedication to the mission of the Ranch. We are pleased to welcome them:



**Alice Nicol** is a native of Arlington, VA, but fell in love with Wyoming during her college years. She married a Wyoming cowboy and has lived in Fremont County for the past 40 years. After retiring from her counseling position at Central Wyoming College, she and her husband have built homes for Habitat for Humanity around the world. She volunteered at the Ranch two years ago because she thought it would be fun, and now she's hooked! Special interests include hiking, camping, fly fishing and working with her therapy dog.



**Nate Bachtell** has been coming to RLR since the mid 1970's with his family. His late father, Donald Bachtell, was a Ranch guest, a director and a session leader. From the age of 13 onward, Nate spent summers as a junior staff ranch hand, working as a wrangler, a maintenance man and a hike leader. He was a member of the RLR Board of Directors from 2005 through 2011. Currently Nate lives and works in San Francisco, CA. The Board also bid farewell to **Dave Cramp** and **Kathy Leithner**. We appreciate their wisdom and support and look forward to seeing them at the Ranch again soon.



### The Ring Lake Ranch Carillon

Published twice yearly by  
**Ring Lake Ranch**

Designed by  
Roderick Robertson

Selected photographs by  
Richard Bondi, Linda Bryant,  
Anna Pinckney Straight,  
Wendy Belkin, Tom Garnhart

### RLR Board of Directors

Sean Roche, *President*  
Julie Mavity-Maddalena, *Vice-President*  
Doug Melius, *Vice President*  
Judy Plows, *Secretary*  
Ann Hunter, *Treasurer*  
Amy Mears    Bill Brown    Jerry Campbell  
Alice Nicol    Nate Bachtell    Mike McKee



# Ring of Friends

**Ring Lake Ranch is sustained and improved by the generous financial and spiritual support of a wide community. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made a financial contribution to the Ranch in 2014.**

HEF indicates a gift in honor of Henry Everding to the Henry Everding Memorial Fund, which supports the horse program.

We apologize if any gifts have been missed or attributed in error. Please let us know if any information needs to be corrected.

#### Ross Lake Donors (\$5000+)

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Dan Kreimer (Elder Student Scholarships)  
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#### Lake Louise Donors (\$1001-\$5000)

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Becky and Harold Walker  
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Paula Wellnitz  
Dana and Linda Wilbanks (HEF)  
Carl and Til Zimmerman

*Special thanks for the generous gifts of Sean Roche for managing our website, and Roderick Robertson for designing the Carillon and our print and online advertising. Thanks as well to Linda Bryant and Wendy Belkin for providing photographs and time lapse videos of Ring Lake Ranch.*

# Ring Lake Ranch

# 2015 Schedule of Programs



## June 14 - 20 Margaret Coel

**Book Club: Redemption in Fiction**  
Christians believe that, through the suffering and death of Jesus, we are redeemed and restored to our rightful place as children of God. And yet we remain imperfect and we remain sinners. We are constantly in need of the reconciliation and rehabilitation inherent in redemption. In fiction, we can see the many ways in which the grace of God offers us redemption throughout our lives. We will explore the concept of ongoing redemption in three novels, *An Unfinished Life* by Mark Spragg, *Saint Maybe* by Anne Tyler, and *The Lost Bird* by Margaret Coel, and one movie, *Atonement*, based on the novel by Ian McEwan. Margaret Coel is the bestselling author of the Wind River mystery novels and four non-fiction books, including *Chief Left Hand*, a biography of the Arapaho chief and history of the Arapaho people. She is the recipient of the Frank Waters Award for Exemplary Writing and Literary Success, the High Plains Award for a Lifetime of Outstanding Work, and the Colorado Arts and Humanities Lifetime Achievement Award.



## July 12 - 18 Frank Rogers

**The Way of Radical Compassion: Practicing the Spiritual Path of Jesus**  
Jesus was a spiritual teacher of a three-fold spiritual path of radical compassion. This path involves 1) knowing ever more deeply an extravagantly compassionate God, 2) being emboldened into a personally transformed self-compassion, and 3) embodying a radical compassion toward others including the suffering, the stranger, the outcast, and even our enemies. While the call for compassion is widely hailed, seldom is it explored precisely how such compassion is cultivated. This workshop teaches practices that deepen our capacities to experience God as a source of love; to transform difficult emotions into grounded self-compassion; and to embody genuine compassion toward others, even difficult people. Frank Rogers is the Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy at the Claremont School of Theology, the co-director of the Center for Engaged Compassion at Claremont Lincoln University, and a lead teacher in the Triptykos School of Compassion. He is the author of *The Compassion Practice: Recalibrating the Pulse of Our Lives to the Heartbeat of Love*, *The God of Shattered Glass*, a novel, and *Finding God in the Graffiti: Empowering Teenagers through Stories*.



## July 19 - 25 Terri Schulz and Wayne Shepperd

**The Wonder of Nature**  
**Session Full; Wait List Only, Please**  
Come and explore the natural history of Ring Lake Ranch and its surroundings. Learn about why the vegetation is the way it is as well as how and why it is changing. Several family-friendly nature hikes and walks will delve into the ranch and the general area. Evening discussions will focus on what folks saw during the day and your natural history questions. In the course of our discussions, changes we see in the Torrey Valley will be put in context of the larger world. Terri Schulz is an ecologist with The Nature Conservancy in Colorado and a former member of the Ranch Board of Directors. Wayne Shepperd is a retired Forest Service research forester who authored more than 120 articles on Rocky Mountain regional forests. He continues to work as a forestry consultant in Ft. Collins, Colorado.



## July 26 - August 1 Bonnie Thurston

**Thomas Merton: Pioneer of Inter-Faith Dialogue**  
This year is the centenary of Merton's birth and provides an opportunity to assess his contribution to inter-religious dialogue. After summarizing Merton's life and contact with the world's religions, we'll explore his particular interest in Buddhism and in Islam and discuss his suggested five "right ways" to engage in what he calls "contemplative dialogue." Merton's principles provide a peaceful, conciliatory alternative to polemical discourse. Bonnie Thurston is a founding member and former president of the International Thomas Merton Society, and has lectured and given retreats on Merton in North America, the United Kingdom and Europe. Formerly William F. Orr Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, she has written or edited 18 theological books (three on Merton). The author of five books of poetry, Bonnie lives quietly in her home state of West Virginia.



## August 2 - 8 Peter Mayer

**Songs of the Universe**  
**Session Full; Wait List Only, Please**  
In the 21st century, we know vastly more than we ever have before about the nature of the world...the origins of matter, the story of life on earth, and our own human journey. But in many ways, our hearts and souls have not caught up with the news that science has been telling us. What is this new story and what does it mean for our lives? Singer songwriter Peter Mayer will lead meditations and conversations about the story of the universe as we have come to understand it through science. It is an epic that awakens awe and wonder, and can be a deep source of wisdom and inspiration. And it is a narrative that begs to be learned as we seek our right relationship with planet earth. Peter will also share some of his songs which have been influenced by these ideas. Peter is a full-time singer-songwriter who has performed in venues nationwide for 20 years. He has sold over 80,000 CDs independently, and is currently working on his 10th recording.



## August 9 - 15 Ellen Davis

**Becoming Human: Poetry Of Praise, Loss, and Hope**  
How can poetry help us to be more truly human and at the same time deepen our understanding of the world that God has made? Can it help us to pray? This session is designed for youth as well as adults, for those who love poetry and those who have given up hope of ever understanding it. We will look at biblical poems (from Psalms and Prophets) alongside the work of contemporary poets (Mary Oliver, Anne Porter, Wendell Berry) who are keenly attuned to the religious significance of the human place in the created order. In both the ancient and the contemporary poems we will hear notes of celebration, lament, and difficult hope. Through them we may come to understand better what it means for us to be the people, and the creatures, of God. Ellen F. Davis is Amos Ragan Kearns Distinguished Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke University Divinity School. Her research focuses on how biblical interpretation bears on faith communities and their responses to the environmental crisis and interfaith relations.



## August 16 - 29 Diana Butler Bass and Brian McLaren

**Vision Quest: Searching for a Meaningful Faith in the World as It Is**  
**Session Full; Wait List Only, Please**  
In this special two week session, Diana Butler Bass and Brian McLaren will share insights from their current writing projects. As thinkers known for their capacity to envision the future of Christianity, they will lead us into a "vision quest" of the world as it is -- not the world we had, nor the one that springs from our own agendas. By exploring social trends, emerging theologies, and spiritual practices, we can discern patterns of holy activity in the world we have. From this deep exploration of this world, they will suggest paths of renewal for theology, Christian practice, and congregations. Diana Butler Bass is an author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. Her eight books include the best-selling *Christianity After Religion*, *A People's History of Christianity* and *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. Brian D. McLaren is an author, speaker, activist, and networker among innovative Christian leaders. His dozen-plus books include *A New Kind of Christianity*, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, *Naked Spirituality*, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?* and *We Make the Road by Walking*.



## August 30 - Sept. 5 Holmes Rolston

**Three Big Bangs: Matter-Energy, Life, Mind**  
At the primordial big bang, matter energy appears, with the remarkable capacity to generate heavier elements and complexity. Life explodes on Earth, with DNA discovering, storing, and transferring information, escalating biodiversity and biocomplexity. The human genius is radically novel, hyper-immensely complex. Ideas pass cumulatively from mind to mind. Those at the center of complex caring intelligence wonder: Is there sacred Logos in, with, and under such breakthrough creativity? Holmes Rolston, III, is University Distinguished Professor and Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Colorado State University. He has written eight books, most recently: *Three Big Bangs: Matter-Energy, Life, Mind*, *Genesis and God*, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, *Environmental Ethics, Science and Religion: A Critical Survey*, *Conserving Natural Value*, and *A New Environmental Ethics: The Next Millennium for Life on Earth*. Rolston gave the Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh in 1997-1998. Rolston was laureate for the 2003 Templeton Prize in Religion, awarded by Prince Philip in Buckingham Palace. He has spoken as distinguished lecturer on seven continents.



For more details on all these programs check our website: [www.ringlake.org](http://www.ringlake.org)

## Scholarships Available

Partial scholarships are available to anyone needing assistance to come to programs at the Ranch. All people are welcome at Ring Lake and we don't want the cost to keep anyone, especially first-time guests, from attending a session. If you have any questions or would like a copy of our simple application, please contact Andy Blackmun at [andy@ringlake.org](mailto:andy@ringlake.org) or 888-458-5253.



## May 24 - May 30 Volunteer Week

**Session Full; Wait List Only, Please**  
Every year, the Ranch relies on volunteers, both individuals and groups, to clean, do major repair and upkeep projects, open the kitchen, and anything else needed to prepare for guests. Please consider joining us for a week of work, fun, and fellowship!

# 2015 Registration



## Volunteers at Ring Lake Ranch in 2015

Volunteering at the Ranch is more popular than ever! Because of the enthusiasm and dedication of the RLR community, Volunteer Week is full and just about all of the volunteer slots during our seminar weeks are taken as well. Nonetheless, sometimes people's plans change, so if you would like to sign up as an alternate volunteer for a particular week, please contact Andy at [andy@ringlake.org](mailto:andy@ringlake.org) or call him at 888-458-5253.

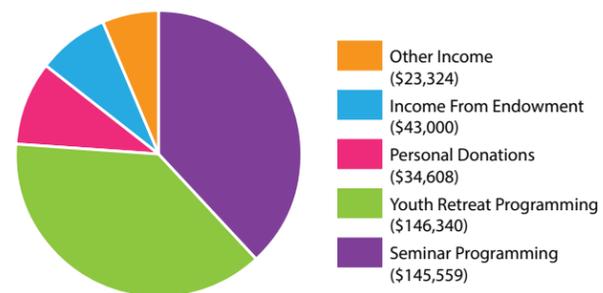
## Transportation Fees for 2015

We are happy to pick up guests from either Jackson Hole or Riverton airport by previous arrangement. PLEASE SELECT YOUR FLIGHT TO ARRIVE PRIOR TO 3:00 P.M. Airport transport fees for the summer: \$60 per person one way, maximum \$120 one way per family or group registered together. We want to make getting to the Ranch as convenient as possible, so please let us know your flight schedule well in advance.

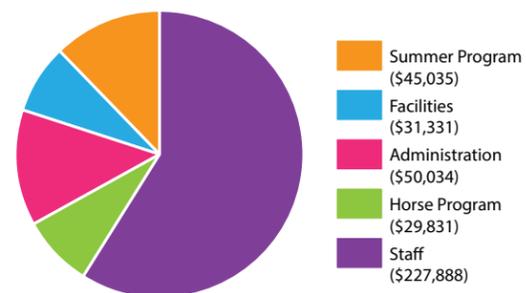
## 2014 Ring Lake Ranch Financial and Program Summary

Through nine seminars, Volunteer Week and five youth retreats in 2014, we hosted a total of 483 guests, including 212 youth and children. Our seminars had 268 guests and volunteers, 93 of whom were new to Ring Lake Ranch.

### 2014 Total Income \$392,831



### 2014 Total Expenses \$384,119



## 2015 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 Andy at mailing address below or [andy@ringlake.org](mailto:andy@ringlake.org)

## ADULT FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Basic lodging with shared bath .....	\$840
Basic lodging with private bath .....	\$955
Large Family cabin with private bath.....	\$998

## YOUTH FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17).....	\$635
Child (ages 12 and under).....	no charge

## ADULT FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Basic lodging with shared bath .....	\$ 1465
Basic lodging with private bath .....	\$ 1670
Large Family cabin with private bath.....	\$ 1735

## YOUTH FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17).....	\$ 1096
Child (ages 12 and under).....	no charge

All fees exclude sales & lodging taxes. Contact Amanda at [amanda@ringlake.org](mailto:amanda@ringlake.org) or 307-455-2663 to inquire about daily and off-season rates. To guarantee a private room, contact Amanda 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 \$260/adult and \$150/youth for 6 day sessions or \$450/adult and \$250/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 Family/private bath       Cabin #

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

## How did you hear about Ring Lake Ranch?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*We accept Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Pay by cash or your personal check and receive a 5% discount in fees. For security purposes, please do not include your credit card number on this form. Please use the online store at [www.ringlake.org/store](http://www.ringlake.org/store) to pay deposits and fees.*

## Return form to:

Ring Lake Ranch

P.O. Box 806

Dubois, WY 82513

(888) 458-5253 toll free

(307) 455-2663

[amanda@ringlake.org](mailto:amanda@ringlake.org)

[www.ringlake.org](http://www.ringlake.org)



RING LAKE RANCH

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Permit No. 25

La Crosse, WI

Return Service Requested

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

**‘But ask the animals, and they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;  
ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you;  
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.**

**Who among all these does not know  
that the hand of the Lord has done this?**

*Job 12:7-10*

