



The Ring Lake Carillon

Ring Lake Ranch • Dubois, Wyoming • Spring 2015

An ecumenical retreat center "renewal in a sacred wilderness"

"It's simple. Ring Lake Ranch awakens the students' awareness of God."

Dan Kreimer, Elder High School retreat leader

The Carillon usually focuses on the seminar retreats that we offer at Ring Lake Ranch, but the Ranch also hosts private retreat groups during our summer season. The most long-standing program is that developed by some of the faculty of Elder High School, a Catholic boys high school in Cincinnati, OH. For sixteen years, three times a summer, rising juniors from Elder have come to experience what our founder Maggie Kahin hoped for young people in her original vision of Ring Lake Ranch: renewal in sacred wilderness. Each week, Dan Kriemer and Greg Alig, along with two adult alumni of previous trips, guide these young men through hikes, rides and yes, even the dish room. They also guide them through a series of large and small group conversations that ask them to reflect on their lives, their relationships and their faith. In a world that often skims across the surface of life, these are important experiences for these students to have together. In celebration of the hundreds of Elder students who have made this journey, here are some reflections on the impact of the program. >p.2





Greg Alig teaches English at Elder HS and has helped Dan Kreimer lead all of the trips since they began in 1999:

Anyone who comes to Ring Lake Ranch must be prepared to sacrifice. It seems counterintuitive for me to write those words: the students who sojourn at the Ranch undoubtedly receive a multitude of gifts during their stay. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the myriad joys, views, and camaraderie a trek to the top of Whiskey Mountain offers, nobody gets to the summit without sacrifice. The students must forego attitudes that the hike is too tough. They must jettison their belief that such a struggle is a bad thing.

Since our retreat is not comprised solely of hikes, however, students also must sacrifice by stepping outside themselves during small group meetings. In order to share, listen, and even commiserate, the students must give up their own perhaps myopic views of others making the retreat with them. They also must sacrifice their own carefully crafted outer masks in order to allow their fellow retreatants to see the real person behind the guise. Why sacrifice? Why does a retreat experience at Ring Lake Ranch require its participants to give so much? That answer is as simple as it is humbling: sacrifice is the way of the Cross. It's what building the Kingdom is all about. For many of our students, their task of building receives a renewed impetus at the Ranch. I cannot think of more fruitful ground on which our students could sacrifice so much while, in the process, gaining infinitely more than that which was given.

Eric Grimm also teaches at Elder HS. He came to the Ranch as a student and has returned as a group leader several times:

Ring Lake Ranch is a special place. It is a place where relationships grow, new friendships are created, and faith is restored. Every year, a group of high school boys from Cincinnati, Ohio receive the opportunity to come to this special place, where they can take a step back, examine their lives, and renew a sense of who they are.

Tucked away from the real world, Ring Lake Ranch has served as a turning point in many of these boys lives, including my own. At its core, it is a place of solitude, but it is through that solitude that allows for a greater human experience. The boys discuss the daily experiences they share, including their memorable hike to the peak of Whiskey Mountain, the freezing plunge into Lake Louise, and their journey on horseback. At home, sometimes these conversations are distant, especially as their responsibilities grow with school, work, sports, and family; however, at Ring Lake Ranch these conversations with one another redefine who they are. They gain a new appreciation of support for one another, as they relate to successes, struggles, and even their faith.

Although their time at Ring Lake Ranch only lasts for a week, they are reminded of their experiences every day - whether it be through the howling of the wind, the stars in the sky, or the friendships that were formed.

Connor Dermody is a junior at Elder HS who came on retreat this summer:

My first time going out to Ring Lake Ranch was when I was eight years old. I went on a week where students from Elder High School were there. My family has been really good friends with Mr. Kriemer and Mr. Alig for years, so they let us join them on their trips. The people I met out there, students, staff, leaders, were all so welcoming and kind. So much so that after that trip, I had set my heart on going to Elder High School. It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. It was then my dream to go on that trip as an actual student at Elder.

This past summer, I finally achieved my dream and got to go out there as a student. The week I spent out there was the best of my life. I made so many new friends, and made new relationships with my teachers who I was out there with. I accomplished things that I never thought that I could, such as climbing on top of Big Whiskey Mountain. I had achieved something the majority of the world could not do. The trip I took out there was life-changing, and one of the best experiences I have encountered in my life.



In Memoriam

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of long-time RLR supporter Priscilla A. Marsh. Priscilla died peacefully October 17, 2014, surrounded by family. She was 86. Born in New York City, she was raised on Long Island, NY, and received a B.A. from Mt. Holyoke College. She was an avid sailor, tennis player and world traveler, having visited every continent except Antarctica.

In 1950 she married Carleton Marsh, Jr, and lived the itinerate life of a New York Central railroader for 20 years, living in ten different Midwest towns until Carl became an Episcopal priest. They served together in two Ohio parishes until he died in 1980 from cancer. Carl and Priscilla had a lifelong interest in Wyoming, having summered near Jackson for 25 years before discovering Ring Lake Ranch, where Carl attended two sessions before his death. Priscilla then moved to Kansas City, instituted the St. Michael's Episcopal Church library—now named for her, and held her own photography exhibit, primarily of Wyoming flowers.

For more than 20 years she volunteered her summers at RLR, doing any job that came her way. She reorganized the Top Cabin library, did laundry, and insisted on strict cleanliness and safety. After the death of Maggie Kahin, she helped maintain the continuity of Ring Lake both by her personal volunteering and Board membership. Twelve years ago, she designed and built her own home on Union Pass, where she continued to spend summers until 2014. Her heart and home were in Wyoming, and she has requested that her ashes, along with Carl's, be spread on Little Whiskey and interred in Dubois Cemetery. A memorial service and final interment is planned in Dubois for the spring of 2015. In lieu of flowers, donations are requested in her memory to Ring Lake Ranch.



It's the People, Silly! by Amy Mears, RLR Board of Directors

An American president of the 20th century was famous for having a placard in campaign headquarters reminding staff that, "It's the Economy, Stupid!" He believed that the election and the state of the nation hinged on fierce conversation about the economy.

Now, I'm not usually stupid, but perhaps I'm sometimes a little bit silly. I get so completely engulfed in the spectacular setting of Ring Lake Ranch that I begin to believe that "It's the Place, Silly!" And because it is such an unusual, startling, ethereal place, maybe it IS "the place," to some degree. But more even than the place, it's the people:

A wrangler helping my 8-year-old fall in love with a sweet, white horse.

A wise church historian pointing the way to reconciliation with dear ones drawing from the path of the Desert Monastics.

A staffer reminding us to mind the night sky: "Tonight is the meteor shower! Don't miss it!"

A hike leader loving to see the trail through the eyes of newbies.

A guest encouraging us to think about ethical treatment of lab animals in an afternoon sharing time.

An angler giving my 12-year-old a fly for her rod-hand-tied, from an elk he had bagged—and celebrating her catch with her.

An Old Testament theologian introducing me to a new translation of scripture.

An artist painting the scene out the window while we watch and gasp.

It's the place, yes; and even more it's the people of Ring Lake Ranch—the first-time guests and the long-term staff and the folks for whom the ranch has been the most significant part of life. The contributions of time and energy that we make are many, and the money that we give in support of Ring Lake Ranch and its programs is vital. Do give what you can give; do come when you can come; do tell your friends about this place and these people. It is among the most significant investments that you can make.

The Ring Lake Ranch Carillon

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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

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

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

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, Genes, 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

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 or 888-458-5253.

May 24 - May 30 Volunteer Week

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!



Ring Lake Ranch • by Marla Dunham

Unfamiliar but wonderful sounds:

Ospreys calling back and forth

As they watch over the large nest of twigs in the top of a tree by the lake,
guarding their territory where the heads of three babies peep over the side;

The hooves of the horses at 5:30 in the morning, when they pass by the cabin
pounding down the rocky road to the corral,

They are the first wakeup call for the ranch,

Lovely Wyoming vistas—layer upon layer of brown, green, red, and blue
with ice-capped mountains in the distance,

A misty, steady rain for several days

A wicked thunderstorm rolls in on a Tuesday afternoon with bolts of lightning
rattling the windows, the rain comes in sideways,

We stand at the window of the kitchen awed by the storm,

Much needed rain for the West affords slippery hikes

A morning horseback ride on Ploughboy and Texas,

The horses know the way

And we, the unfamiliar, go along for the ride,

Able to drink in the beauty of the countryside from our lofty perch

At dusk one evening from the living room window, we see a lone horse step gracefully out onto the top of the ridge creating a lovely Western tableau

One afternoon, Cocoa, a single roan pony with a white blaze on the forehead,
charges up the hill by the cabin, a glorious sight

Sometimes the wind picks up and sweeps down the valley and cools down the temperature,

making the mosquitoes less of a threat

Below the ranch buildings petroglyphs illuminate the rocky cliffs
sacred ground for the Sheep-eaters, ancestors of the Shoshone

who over eight-hundred years ago sought spiritual wisdom

People from all over the United States gather here

at a rest stop of great beauty

for the often tired, over-worked, busy folks

To put aside so many of their trivial tasks and daily worries

Just to enjoy the solitude and nature's abundance and

Just to be.

Staff Assistants

The Ranch welcomed several enthusiastic staff assistants last summer. Our thanks to Lara Mears, Elizabeth Blackmun, and Kaylee Cospito for pitching in around the Ranch.

Young people between the ages of 13 and 18 are welcome to apply to be staff assistants during the 2015 season. We ask staff assistants to work between 20 and 30 hours per week. In return, staff assistants receive room board and a small stipend during their stay. Depending on rooming arrangements, staff assistants usually

stay for one or two weeks; more weeks may be available at the discretion of the Director. Staff assistants need to have come to the Ranch as guests at least once. The work can vary each day: sometimes we need help around the kitchen, sometimes down at the corral, sometimes covering the back of a group on a hike. Teenagers interested in working as staff assistants should contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or 888-458-5253.



In Gratitude for our 2014 Volunteers

Our volunteers always provide vital support to keep the Ranch going, and the 2014 season was no different. We hosted a great roster of volunteers for Volunteer Week at the beginning of the season: David Petersen and Sara Myers, Dave Lewis, Ted and Renette Laase, David Turpin, Marilyn and Jim Laudon, Jacque Franklin and Tom Francis, Joel Francis, Ellen Francis, Bev and Jim Young, and Becky Meyer and Walker. These hard-working folks completed a long list of tasks: applied clear coat to cabins 1 and 4, cleaned and prepped guest cabins, reshelved the Living Room library and added biography shelves from Top Cabin, built new shelves for and set up the Gift Shop, cleaned up brush around the property, recoated and repaired trail signs, pulled rocks from the corral, expanded the corral, repaired window screens, washed picture windows, installed the new ice maker, designed a new sign for the highway entrance signpost, replaced the electrical panel in cabin 2, cleaned and organized the tack shed, exercised the horses, and inspected building foundations.

We also had at least one person, if not two or three, every week but one for the rest of the summer. A hearty thank you to those weekly volunteers: David Turpin, Kevin and Liz Sellstrom, Mike Morris, Ted and Paula Hiebert, Alice and Fred Nichol, Dwight Haberman, Bill and Jean Wolfe, Dorian McGlannan, Joseph Cospito, Dan Hauk, Melissa Mickiewicz, Mike and Elise Dermody, David and Gail Hendersen, Becky Brown, Craig Mahood, Donna Rolfs, Dawn Sample, and Dick and Gretchen Williams.

If you are interested in volunteering during the 2015 season, either during our Volunteer Week May 24th – 30th or during one of our sessions, please contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or call him at 888-458-5253.

2015 Registration

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](mailto:andy@ringlake.org) at mailing address below or 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](mailto:amanda@ringlake.org) at amanda@ringlake.org or 307-455-2663 to inquire about daily and off-season rates. To guarantee a private room, contact [Amanda](mailto:amanda@ringlake.org) 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 \$250/adult and \$135/youth for 6 day sessions or \$430/adult and \$200/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

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 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

www.ringlake.org



RING LAKE RANCH

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La Crosse, WI



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

In the story of God, waters appear again and again as places where the sacred becomes evident, where the presence of God shows forth in ways we cannot miss. From ancient times Celtic folk have called such places thin places. In the physical landscape and in the turning of the year, thin places are spaces where the veil between worlds becomes permeable, and heaven and earth meet. It's not that God somehow becomes more there than in other places, but rather that a veil within us falls away; we recognize and receive the presence of God with a clarity that can be difficult to come by in our daily lives.
Jan Richardson

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