



The Ring Lake Carillon

Ring Lake Ranch • Dubois, Wyoming • Fall 2019



An ecumenical retreat center offering "renewal in sacred wilderness."

More Than a Vacation

Andy Blackmun, RLR Director

It's late summer now and you might be thinking it's time to squeeze in a last-minute vacation. Or maybe you've been looking forward to a long-planned one to some distant location. This is just what I need, you're thinking. I can't wait to get out there on the beach...or the mountains...or those beautiful ruins.

We think we can escape from our job. From our problems. From our depression. From our low-grade dissatisfaction with our ordinary lives. But what do we find when we arrive to the exotic location? ... We find, after the rush wears off, that we don't feel any different. We brought ourselves with us...the true source of our unhappiness.

(Greek philosopher) Seneca was an avid traveler who saw how often his fellow tourists were in denial, how they foolishly thought a change of scenery could exempt them from the real inner-work they needed to do. He liked

to quote Epicurus who said that 'every man flees himself.'

That's why vacations often disappoint. Because as beautiful as they are, as much as we design them for relaxation, they are incapable of overriding our anxiety and our dysfunction. If our soul is tense, no amount of massages will relax it. If our mind is chaos, no amount of time in the water will order it. If our life is a mess, eventually we'll have to return to it—and all the tours and long dinners will evaporate it in a minute.

If you want to be happy, if you want to relax, look inward. Do the work. Not only will you be happier at home, but you'll enjoy your time on the road more too.

A friend shared this passage from The Daily Stoic email on social media this summer. Like most of us, I am familiar with the sentiment of this passage; several years ago, my

family and I went to Kauai for a lovely week playing in the surf and exploring the island. One of my children stumbled out of bed after we returned, eyes red with fatigue and grief, and lamented "Kauai just feels like a dream now." This Daily Stoic passage is an important message but it also reminded me that Ring Lake Ranch offers more than just a short escape to a far-off place.

Ring Lake Ranch certainly provides a change of scenery and an altered pace that allow us to 'get away' for a few days and experience a different way of living. We ride kindly horses over beautiful terrain, hike to striking mountain peaks and waterfalls, and fish in world-renowned lakes and streams. The peace found in these activities can be easily lost once our retreat is over. But, the Ranch also gives us all sorts of chances to discover elements that can return home with us. Our horses are the best sort of therapists

- always open to us but also always honest about what they find in our spirit. The trails around the Ranch are pathways for deep reflection, like a labyrinth flung out over the hills. Our conversations during the evening seminars and over meals at table can stir enthusiasm and resolve for movement elsewhere in our lives. Indeed, without exception, our seminar offerings for the 2020 season all provide chances for deep, meaningful, spiritual transformation. And, unlike many vacation opportunities that are mostly anonymous, the Ranch community – the people, the creatures, the landscape – will always welcome us back in deeply personal ways. Returning to this sacred land only strengthens the power it has to influence our lives. So, absolutely, Ring Lake Ranch invites us to savor its exterior beauty while we also 'look inward' and 'do the work' needed for peace and health.

What's Your 'RLR Have to Do' list?

Jeff and Jeanne Reed

Jeff is a member of the RLR Board of Directors



On our first trip to Ring Lake Ranch we'd planned to take advantage of the hiking opportunities, the sabbath time, and looked forward to the evening seminars but, to be honest, horseback riding wasn't on our 'have to do' list. However, after some breathtaking hikes (both in terms of scenery as well as lack of oxygen for Midwesterners!) and friendly nudging from the wrangling staff we set off on our first trail ride. We quickly became enamored with the herd and appreciated the consideration the wranglers showed towards guests, particularly those not all that comfortable in the saddle. Jeanne became especially smitten with Baxter, a sure-footed mule, who despite being stubborn on the trail was a gentle giant.

Since that first year, the riding program at the Ranch has become a 'must' for us during our visits. Just like hiking, shared meals, and the seminars, riding has become an integral part of our Ranch experience. And it goes beyond riding; being with the horses, watching them interact with each other and guests, and hearing them graze outside your cabin at 3 a.m. are all part of that experience. It is something we value and we now include the riding program in our annual giving to the Ranch. Because the program is part of what makes Ring Lake Ranch what it is, whether you've ever ridden a horse at Ring Lake or not or if you are an old cowhand, we hope you'll consider your own financial support of the riding program.



"Peace and all good"

Carl's favorite sign-off

Carl Koch, June 16th, 1945 – May 30th, 2019

Ring Lake Ranch Director Emeritus Carl Koch died this spring after an extended struggle with cancer. He served as Director of Ring Lake Ranch from 2006 to 2011. Prior to his tenure at the Ranch, he worked in high school and university education and administration, as senior editor and writer at St. Mary's Press, and concurrently as the Director of the Master's in Servant Leadership Program at Viterbo University and the Program Director at the Franciscan Spirituality Center in LaCrosse, WI. Carl authored 37 books and numerous articles; his last book was *Renewal in Sacred Wilderness: The First 50 Years of Ring Lake Ranch*.

During his tenure at Ring Lake Ranch, Carl worked diligently to stabilize Ring Lake Ranch as an organization; he compiled a full Operations Manual for the Ranch, hired Ben Verheul to serve as the long-term Facilities Manager, and expanded the roster of both seminar speakers and guests, all while keeping the Ranch's financial accounts and guest registrations each year. Just as importantly, Carl

and his wife Joyce, who served as co-Director and Head Cook, led the Ranch with profound love and a deep sense of hospitality as an expression of their faith. The seminar leaders he invited taught seminars, of course, but Carl taught us all as well – through his morning reflections, his rich baritone laugh at conversations over meals, his loving leadership and patient care of the summer staff, and his daily devotion to Joyce and their "wee funny doggies." Even in his last days, Carl offered wisdom on how to live and die at peace. As he faced an incurable diagnosis, he told a friend, "Suffering comes when I feel pulled apart, torn asunder by fear and doubt. God 'heals' me through all the small and large signs of divine care that keep telling me that I am loved and cared for." Carl carried Ring Lake Ranch as one of those great signs of divine care in his life. Likewise, his leadership of Ring Lake Ranch will always be one of the great signs of the love of the Holy One for us, as well. Peace and all good, dear friend.

The Ring Lake Ranch Carillon

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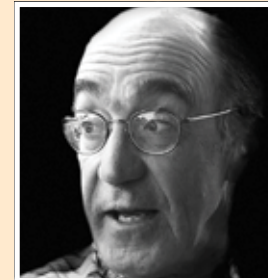
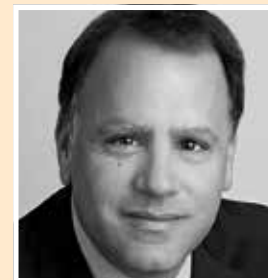
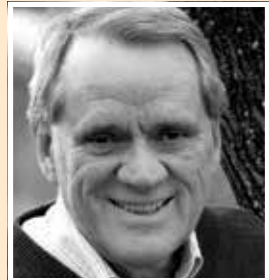
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Memorial gifts can be made to Ring Lake Ranch, the Wafer Food Bank or the Franciscan Hospitality House in LaCrosse, WI.



Ring Lake Ranch

2020 Schedule of Programs



May 24 – May 30: Volunteer Week

Every year, the Ranch relies on volunteers to clean, do major repair and upkeep projects and anything else needed to prepare for guests. Please consider joining us for a week of work, fun, and fellowship!



Scholarships Available

Scholarship assistance is available, particularly for first-time guests to Ring Lake Ranch. Please contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org for more information or to request our simple scholarship application.

May 31 – June 6:

Amy Mears Fuzz Therapy: Celebrating Fiber Arts

Bring your current project, favorite equipment, and adventuresome spirit for a week exploring the fiber arts together. We will enjoy community conversation about faith and fur and all the Ranch has to offer as we set up our work- and conversation-spaces throughout the wilderness. We will teach and learn with one another according to whatever we bring: crochet, felting, weaving, knitting, spinning with spindles and wheels, and preparing wool. Show and Tell will play an important role in our time together. We'll forage for dyestuffs and see what colors we can create! Field trips to Wyoming Wool Works in Dubois, Pingora Yarn in Lander, and a happy herd of Shetland sheep in Crowheart are daytime options. **Amy Mears** will convene the group and provide a whimsical collection of discussion topics. She is the co-pastor of Glendale Baptist Church in Nashville, TN and teaches preaching for seminaries in the Midwest and South. She spends her spare time kayaking and hiking, spinning and knitting, and doing chemistry experiments in natural dyeing to no ill effect, so far.

July 12 – 18:

Chelsea Yarborough Finding, Owning, and Using Your Voice: A Workshop on Proclaiming

How do we develop our voices and not simply become echoes to all the noise that surrounds us? What does it mean to proclaim as an agent for change, hope, and possibility, whether it be on public platforms or through interpersonal dialogue? Walking through the lives and proclaiming of Sojourner Truth, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Fannie Lou Hamer, we will talk about what it means to develop our voices and think through strategies for speaking beyond the echo. This workshop will have both a seminar and practicum element as we work through our own sense of voice while learning from some examples that have come before us. **Chelsea Brooke Yarborough** is a Ph.D. candidate at Vanderbilt University in Homiletics and Liturgics. She is an ordained minister, a poet, an enneagram enthusiast, and a lover of leadership development.

July 19 – Aug 1: History of the Wind River Valley: Two Perspectives

The town of Dubois, WY and the area surrounding Ring Lake Ranch have a rich history that spans centuries and involves a variety of peoples and traditions. This session, co-sponsored by the Dubois Museum, will examine the history of both local native American tribes and the European settlers of Dubois. **Steve Banks** will discuss the history of early fur traders and Dubois Museum staff will present the basic history of the town of Dubois as well as the work of railroad tie hacks. **John Washakie**, great-grandson of Chief Washakie, will talk about the history of the reservation. **Gail Ridgely** will discuss the Sand Creek Massacre which was partially responsible for the relocation of the Northern Arapaho tribe to the Wind River Reservation from Eastern Colorado. **Millie Friday** will talk about her work retrieving the remains of Arapaho children who died at the Carlisle Indian School. We will also offer day trips to view the remains of flumes, dams, and cabins built by the tie hacks, and sheep traps built by the Sheepeater people, the ancestors of the Shoshone tribe.

Aug. 2 – Aug 8:

Wes Granberg- Michaelson Faith as Pilgrimage

What if we walked our way into faith, as a pilgrimage? What if where we walked with our feet was as important as what we believed in our heads in shaping our spiritual journey? What must we leave behind when we are beckoned into unknown paths? In prior centuries, millions of people made pilgrimages to sites they considered holy, such as Jerusalem, Rome, Trondheim, and Santiago de Compostela. **Wes Granberg-Michaelson** has experienced that pilgrimage to Santiago; he's also gathered with 1 million Christians in Nigeria and pilgrims going to the Santuario de Chimayo in New Mexico. Wes served as General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America from 1994-2011. Earlier he was Legislative Assistant for Senator Mark Hatfield and Director of Church and Society for the World Council of Churches. He currently serves as Chair of the Board for Sojourners. He's the author of seven books, most recently *Future Faith: Ten Challenges Re-shaping Christianity in the 21st Century* and the forthcoming *Without Oars: Casting Off into a Life of Pilgrimage*.

Aug. 9 – 15:

Donald Schell & Paul Vasile Before Words and Beyond Words

When jazz trumpeter Clark Terry was asked how he made jazz, he'd respond: "Simple – you imitate, assimilate, then innovate." Thus, the core of this session: shared attention, communication in listening, and imitation – not just music-making, but all the improvisations of our emergent humanity. This seminar's playful practice of improvisational song, wordless storytelling, and shared experience-and-reflection noticing and wondering will help us rediscover ourselves as persons-in-community, the image of God that Gregory of Nyssa insists belongs to all of us together in our one humanity. **Donald Schell** is the founder of St. Gregory of Nyssa Church in San Francisco and the founding director of Music that Makes Community, an ecumenical, international project to recover and renew oral tradition practices of congregational song. **Paul Vasile** is a freelance church musician, consultant, and composer committed to building and renewing faith communities through music and liturgy. As the Executive Director of Music that Makes Community, Paul is passionate about sharing leadership practices that sustain faith communities through the practice of paperless (oral/ aural tradition) singing.

Aug. 16 – 22:

Diana Butler Bass & Roger Freet Writing and Reading in the Wilderness

The way that Americans engage words has gone through a revolution in the last decade. We will explore the spiritual practices and practical issues of writing, from shaping ideas and stories to platform development and publishing. Diana and Roger have worked together since 2005, first as writer-and-editor, and then as author-and-agent. They will share from their experience of creating books together, the challenges along the way, and what they have learned about reading and writing in a changing culture of words. **Diana Butler Bass** is an author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. Her books include the bestselling books *Grateful, Grounded, Christianity After Religion*, and *A People's History of Christianity*. **Roger Freet** works as a literary agent with Foundry Literary and Media Agency. Before joining Foundry, Roger worked as an Executive Editor at HarperOne, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, where he published bestselling authors like James Martin, Paul Stanley, Bart Ehrman, Adam Hamilton, and Stephen Prothero.

Aug. 23 – 29

Diana Butler Bass & Marianne Borg Practicing Wisdom: A Way of Life for Everyone

Exploding the myths that wisdom is an esoteric gift or spiritual commodity, Diana and Marianne will explore the ways that wisdom guides through all stages of our life, how it can be nurtured and practiced, and what difference it makes in a post-truth culture to individuals and communities. **Diana Butler Bass** is an author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. Her books include the bestselling books *Grateful, Grounded, Christianity After Religion*, and *A People's History of Christianity*. **Marianne Borg** is a retired Episcopal priest and the widow of Marcus Borg. She is the Founding Chair of the Marcus J. Borg Foundation. She and Marcus have been part of the Ring Lake Ranch experience for many years, which was a transformative environment and community for them both.

Aug. 30 – Sept. 5

DeWitt Daggett Horses as Doorway to the Sacred: A Spiritual Practice of Belonging

Humans are a herd species for whom membership means life. This week we will explore the sacred as human belonging in the great web of existence and the RLR horses, a fellow herd species, will be our guides. We will ask horses to mediate a deeply embodied remembering of our participatory membership in an infinitely relational universe, an idea captured by the Hindu and Buddhist images of Indra's Net. Engaging with horses as a spiritual practice will help us understand our greater wholeness/holiness with nature, the universe, and God. **Please note:** The week will be limited to fifteen riding participants with prerequisites of unsupervised comfort on and around horses and the ability to mount up without the aid of a mounting block or human assistance. Non-riding guests are welcome to register and participate in other activities and the evening sessions. **DeWitt Daggett** has been a wrangler at Ring Lake Ranch since 2015. His previous lives include geologist, audio book producer and publisher, and farrier. He holds an MTS from Iliff School of Theology.



Many Thanks to Our 2019 RLR Volunteers

Our 2019 volunteers helped keep Ring Lake Ranch going for another great summer. Our Volunteer Week roster included David and Gail Henderson, Dawn and Rowan Starks, Mike McKee, Carol Michalski, Richard Gilbert, Renette and Ted Laase, Susan Robinett, Alice and Fred Nicol, Jeff Reed, Janet Kami, and Ryan Collins. Becky and Harold Walker and Ken Iha volunteered for Staff Week work, as well. The Volunteer Week crew cleaned and prepped guest cabins, installed ceiling

slats in the Living Room and Chapel, rebuilt the Laundry Room floor, installed another hitching rail in the corral, installed a new sign at the highway turn-off, built a new boot storage box for the tack shed, cleared trails on foot and horseback, and stocked and reorganized the gift shop.

We are also grateful to Mike Morris, Steve Koehn, Dwight Haberman, Deb McNamara, Bill and Jean Wolfe, Jami Andersen, Kari and Ryan Collins, and Jan Mueller for their help as

volunteers in a variety of capacities throughout the season. Particular thanks go to Becky Brown and Zainab Antepi, who both served as long-term volunteers this summer. Volunteers are always an important part of the Ranch summer season. Please consider joining us for our 2020 Volunteer Week, May 24th – May 30th, or during one of our sessions. Contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or call him at 888-458-5253 to sign up or ask any questions.

Staff Assistants

We are also grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, and hard work of our Staff Assistants for 2019: Eva Stahl, Olivia Pratt, Clara Pratt, Turner Cole, and Ben Blackmun.

We invite young people between the ages of 13 and 18 who have been to RLR at least once to apply to be staff assistants for our 2020 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. The work ranges from helping in the kitchen and dining hall to assisting in the gift shop to helping with wrangling chores. Interested youth should contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or 888-458-5253.

2020 Registration

2020 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 Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or 888-458-5253 toll free

ADULT FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Basic cabin with shared bath.....\$998

Basic lodging with private bath \$1149

Large Family cabin with private bath.....\$1200

YOUTH FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17) \$765

Child (ages 12 and under)..... no charge

ADULT FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Basic lodging with shared bath \$ 1765

Basic lodging with private bath \$ 2060

Large Family cabin with private bath.....\$ 2089

YOUTH FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17) \$ 1320

Child (ages 12 and under)..... no charge

All fees exclude sales & lodging taxes. Contact Amanda at 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 \$270/adult and \$160/youth for 6 day sessions or \$470/adult and \$270/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.

•Please note: For 2 week sessions we will be charging a \$100/adult fee to cover meals and staff expenses for the weekend stay

Number of Registrants:

_____ Adults @ rate \$_____

_____ Youth (13-17) \$_____

_____ Children(12 & under) no charge

TOTAL (without taxes) \$_____

Deposit Amount \$_____

Scholarship Donation \$_____

Please consider a donation to the scholarship fund for a guest who may not otherwise be able to attend. Thank you.

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)

King Bed? Twin 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?

(\$80 per person/trip or \$160/family/trip)

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 to pay deposits and fees.

Return form to:

Ring Lake Ranch

P.O. Box 806

Dubois, WY 82513

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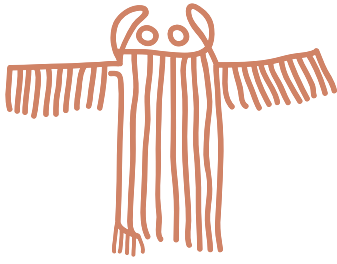
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La Crosse, WI



Come join us at Ring Lake Ranch
for
“renewal in sacred wilderness.”

*“Have I ever said that the day was too hot or too cold
Or the night too long as black as oil anyway,
Or the morning, washed blue and emptied entirely
Of the second-rate, less than happiness
As I stepped down from the porch and set out along
The green paths of the world?”*

From

“Am I Not Among the Early Risers”

by Mary Oliver

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