



The Ring Lake Carillon

Ring Lake Ranch • Dubois, Wyoming • Fall 2023

An ecumenical retreat center offering “renewal in sacred wilderness”



RINGING THE DINNER BELL —RING LAKE RANCH—

It's a great big day for Ring Lake Ranch! This issue of The Carillon is the official launch of Ringing the Dinner Bell, a three-year capital campaign that will fund four significant projects on the property.

The majority of the funds will go to a complete overhaul of the kitchen and dish room. There have been small, piecemeal improvements over the course of more than five decades of cooking and serving Ranch guests and staff, but it is past time for a careful and thoughtful plan for efficiency and safety and convenience to become a reality. A new layout, new appliances, consolidation of dedicated spaces for storage and cleaning supplies, and a dishwashing space/system that will make your dish group time even more fun are all in the works. The dining room will receive a good going-over with sanding and staining the walls, refinished floors, and new windows.

Staff housing is the other significant movement of the capital campaign. The Annex, a small unit above Top Cabin, will be torn down and replaced with 3 new staff housing spaces on that footprint. Top Cabin will undergo an internal renovation and, we hope, the addition of a half bathroom, becoming 3 units suitable for staff or guests.

Finally (although likely the first thing that happens), we'll purchase a tractor that will accomplish the things that running a rural retreat center requires. With it, Kirk will be able to dig big rocks out of the corral, improve the driveway (your car's suspension will be happy with that!), build some retaining walls around the new septic system

(more on that elsewhere in this issue of the Carillon), and accomplish a hundred other things that need to be done in the course of a year on the Ranch.

The goal of Ringing the Dinner Bell is to raise \$750,000 and we're well on the way! Following the January 2023 adoption of the campaign's program, the Board of Directors immediately made pledges and contributions—100% of them (to no one's surprise!) As we explained Ringing the Dinner Bell goals to guests during the 2023 summer season, a number of them have also pledged and given to the campaign. We are close to having \$200,000 raised before even going public. That's such encouraging news!

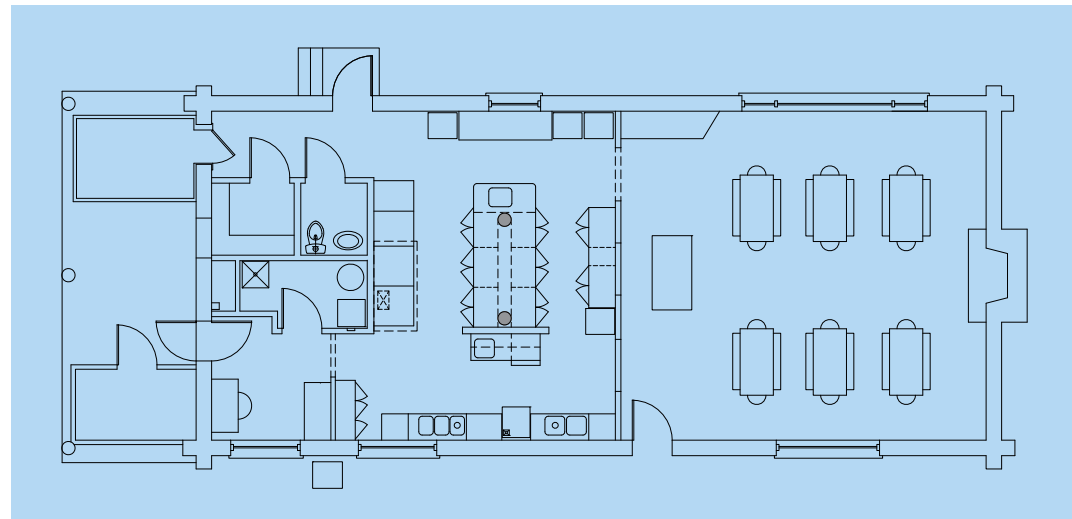
We are off to a great start but to meet our goal, Ring Lake Ranch will need all sort of contributions. We will need large financial gifts. We will need small financial gifts. We will need in-kind gifts. We will need the gift of information. One Ranch guest is helping us find kitchen cabinets at a discount; another has contacts with commercial appliance resources; several are working on the tractor idea. One of my favorite Ranch moments for the 2023 season was a conversation with a 16-year-old student from Elder High School in Cincinnati who read the Ringing the Dinner Bell display on the Dining Room wall and offered a \$20 from his wallet saying, “I want to help with this.” The adults who sponsor the Elder High School trips followed suit with a large gift.

[continued on page 2](#)





DONATE HERE!



continued from page 1

Do you have information that we could use to complete this campaign? Will you make a pledge to **Ringing the Dinner Bell**? Email me and let me know what we can count on from you. Are you able to make a donation—either as a one-time gift or in annual or monthly installments? Please contact me at amy@ringlake.org or Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org and let us know what you're thinking. Scanning the QR code up in the corner or going to ringlake.org/donate will take you to a **Ringing the Dinner Bell** Paypal account where you can give or make a pledge. If you make a contribution through the website or Venmo, be sure to note that it's for **Ringing the Dinner Bell**.

As soon as the last guests drive through the gate in September 2024, we will begin the kitchen renovations. We plan to do the demolition work before the winter's extreme weather begins, complete the interior work during the cold season, and begin the 2025 season in a brand-new culinary space! There is sure to be a summer-long celebration, so look at your calendar for 2025 and make your plans to be there. Thanks for all the ways that you participate and contribute to the community that has formed at Ring Lake Ranch in our 57 years. And thanks for **Ringing the Dinner Bell**!

Amy Mears, Associate Director



The Ring Lake Ranch Carillon

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Ring Lake Ranch

Designed by
Roderick Robertson

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Sally Baycroft, Wendy Belkin,
Scott Copeland, Gary Batchelor,
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“Woman on Rock with Stone”



*After the mountain storm
my haunches are chilled
by sitting on a rock,
decorated with a patch
of furry green moss
and colorful lichens.
The absolute stillness
of the glacial lake ahead
reflects a deeper stillness
below this merest of winds.
I hold a small lump
of golden soapstone,
flat at the bottom,
bulbous at the sides,
like an ossified bone
which it isn't.
Somewhere to my right
a small bird chitters
her noon day prayers.
Richer than Sheba's Queen,
all the perfumes of Arabia
could not make
me wealthier
than this shining moment.*

8/7, 16/2023

Bonnie Thurston

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →



May 26 – June 1

Gareth Higgins and David LaMotte

A Different Lens:

The Power of Transformative Storytelling

Gareth and David are both passionate about stories — the ones we tell each other and ourselves, the ones that inform our daily actions, the ones that limit or expand our imagination, and the ones that transform us and literally change the world. To be a part of this week's gathering, you just need to be open to the idea that stories matter. These sessions will unfold with grace and stimulation, challenge and affirmation, making space for us all to re-examine the stories we have come to believe about the world and our places within it. A Belfast native, **Gareth Higgins** now lives and works in both the US and Ireland. He has been involved in peace-building and violence reduction efforts in Northern Ireland. Author or co-author of seven books including *How Not to be Afraid*, Gareth also helped found the *Wild Goose*, *New Story*, and *Movies & Meaning* festivals. **David LaMotte** is a musician, author, and a holder of space for conversations that matter. He has presented over 3000 concerts, workshops, and lectures and released thirteen albums and three books, including *You Are Changing the World Whether You Like It Or Not*.



June 9 – 15

Rebekah & Joel LeMon

Sending Thoughts and Prayers

We've all heard it. We've probably said it. Confronted with deep pain, not knowing what to do or say, we find ourselves "sending thoughts and prayers." This phrase reflects concern but often feels distant and detached. And for some, "sending thoughts and prayers" can signal the sender's unwillingness—even resistance—to do anything more costly. These sessions will explore how the Psalms can model "sending thoughts and prayers" as earnest attempts to bring about wholeness, both for individuals and communities. For centuries, the Psalms have taught communities how to think about suffering and how to experience hope. The Psalms can direct our thoughts and prayers to bring us closer to those who suffer. Even more, they can guide our actions as we strive for wholeness and justice. **The Rev. Rebekah LeMon** is the Senior Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Ga. Before entering pastoral ministry, Rebekah was a corporate litigator and active in pro bono work for asylum seekers and children in the juvenile justice system in Georgia. **The Rev. Dr. Joel LeMon** is the Harp Distinguished Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at the Candler School of Theology. His writing focuses on the Psalms and the reception history of the Bible.

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →



June 23 – 29

Sandra Smith

The Enneagram as Portal to Essence

Beginning with the understanding that we are not our Enneagram type, we'll use the Enneagram Map as a guide to deepening awareness of our automatic patterns and create some distance between patterns and presence. Participants will be invited into presence and receptivity practices to explore throughout the day whether on hikes, horse rides, or lake activities. We will conclude with an honoring of the essential qualities of Being that are inherent in us. While a working knowledge of one's Enneagram type would be helpful, all are welcome to attend. **Sandra Smith, MDiv**, is a Certified Narrative Enneagram teacher and an IEA (International Enneagram Association) Accredited Professional. For over 20 years, Sandra has taught the Enneagram internationally as a tool for personal, professional and spiritual development. Using the Enneagram map, Sandra leads organizational trainings, facilitates public workshops, and offers spiritual direction. She co-hosts the podcast, *Heart of the Enneagram*, and co-authored its companion book. Her life experiences as a female, identity as a lesbian, love for Earth, and commitment to equity and inclusion shape her teaching and consulting. **Session is full, wait list only please.**



July 7 – 13

Chris La Tray

Poetry as Spiritual Practice

"Real poetry is to lead a beautiful life. To live poetry is better than to write it." — Matsuo Bashō.

The practice of quiet attentiveness and observation is critical to the writing and enjoyment of poetry, and a key element of what makes life worth living in many, many ways. It is a refuge for Chris; perhaps it can be for you too. We will read, discuss, and write poems from three (or more) points of reflection. In particular, we will consider Impermanence, Mindfulness, and Joy, and relate these ideas to a spiritual practice, regardless of (or lack of) religion. **Chris La Tray** is a Métis storyteller, a descendent of the Pembina Band of the mighty Red River of the North, and an enrolled member of the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He has been named Montana Poet Laureate for 2023-25. He is the author of three books, including the forthcoming *Becoming Little Shell*, and *One-Sentence Journal: Short Poems and Essays from the World at Large*, which won the 2018 Montana Book Award and a 2019 High Plains Book Award. Chris writes the weekly newsletter "An Irritable Métis" and lives near Missoula, Montana. **Session is nearly full so register soon!**

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →



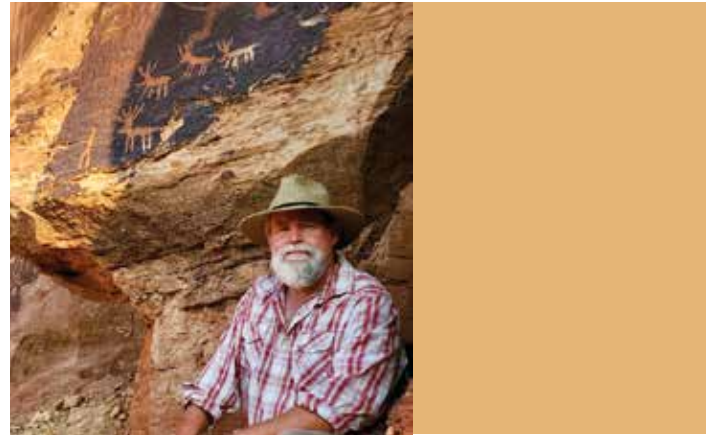
July 14 – 20

Tripp Fuller

Faith After the Merchants of Certainty

Over the last century, religion has become increasingly toxic in the public square. Beyond the institutional and ethical failures of different religious communities, there is growing unease about God. So many Godsplainers, confident atheists, and believers alike are equally assured that facts and reason justify their position. What if this kind of certainty impedes exploring life's most profound mysteries? What if the questions humans have been asking around campfires throughout history require a more nuanced and open conversation? We will explore how contemporary science and ancient wisdom can inspire a renewed vision of the sacred and the possibility of deep faith after certainty.

Tripp Fuller is a podcaster, theologian, minister and competitive home brewer. Currently he is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Theology & Science at the University of Edinburgh. He received his PhD in Philosophy, Religion, and Theology at Claremont Graduate University. For over 12 years Tripp has been doing the Homebrewed Christianity podcast where he interviews different scholars about their work. The podcast inspired a book series with Fortress Press called the *Homebrewed Christianity Guides to...* topics like God, Jesus, Spirit, Church History etc. **Session is nearly full so register soon!**



July 21 – 27

Craig Childs

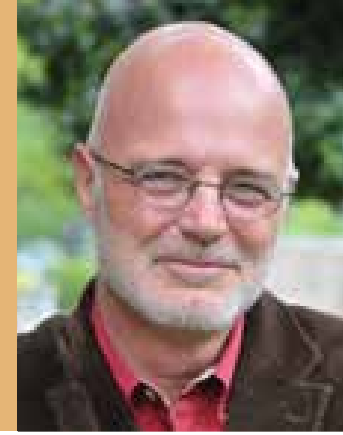
The Old Stories:

Ancestral Imagery in Rock Art

We live in a landscape of ancestry; To live in a place, in fact belong to it, it's important to recognize its oldest voices. To be cognizant of this history we turn to what was written before, rocks marked with messages, legends, renderings, and prayers. These Indigenous records are the oldest deeds to the land. What do they represent, how are they connected to each other, and what do they say about the ancient world? The sessions will focus on aspects of rock art from astronomical alignments to clan symbols, and motifs of animals, hunting, and birth. At its heart, this is a storytelling workshop that links an ancient era with our own.

Craig Childs, author of *Tracing Time: Seasons of Rock Art on the Colorado Plateau*, has spent a lifetime in the company of this kind of imagery. He comes to us from field travel informed by interviews and conversations with Native scholars, scientists, and rock art aficionados. Childs has published more than a dozen critically-acclaimed books on nature, culture, and science. **Session is nearly full so register soon!**

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →



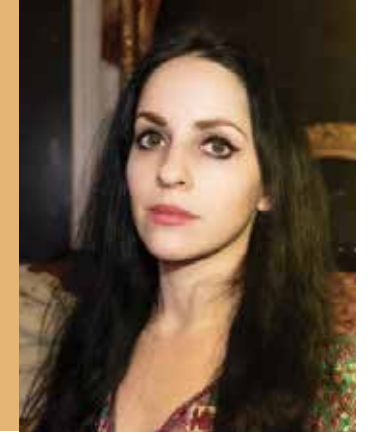
July 28 – Aug 10

Diana Butler Bass and Brian McLaren

The Wild Bible:

Reading (and Preaching) Our Sacred Text as an Ecological Library

For most of Christian history, the Bible has been read and preached as a set of instructions on how to go to heaven after we die. Diana and Brian believe that approach is misguided, even tragic, especially in these times. This session will study the Bible as a rich library of ecological wisdom for living thoughtfully, sustainably, and abundantly while we're still alive on Earth. Each session will offer a close, imaginative reading of one or two key biblical texts. We hope you'll see the ecological groundedness of the Bible and understand why reverence for the Earth is so vital in this time of ecological overshoot, climate change, and civilizational transition. **Diana Butler Bass** is an independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. Her books include the bestselling *Freeing Jesus*, *Grateful, Grounded*, *Christianity After Religion*, and *A People's History of Christianity*. Diana regularly consults with religious organizations, leads conferences for religious leaders, and teaches and preaches in a variety of venues. **Brian D. McLaren** is an author, speaker, activist, and networker among innovative Christian leaders. His dozen-plus books include *Faith After Doubt*, *Do I Stay Christian?* and *The Great Spiritual Migration*. **Session is full, wait list only please.**



Aug 11 – 17

Ruby Lal and Molly Crabapple

Creating Art and History:

Steps, Digressions, and Allure

As Molly and Ruby have collaborated on *Tiger Slayer*, a young-adult version of Ruby's book *Empress*, a biography of India's 17th-century female leader Nur Jahan, they have encountered new directions - digressions and allure. The painter and writer Molly found Ruby's ways with art fresh and intriguing. An accomplished historian, Ruby found Molly's brilliant eye a new way to consider history. During the sessions, we will explore why both art and history are creative and why both disciplines can be visual and textual. How do we come together to create? How do the familiar and the mysterious speak to each other? How do we respond when the unexpected takes shape? **Molly Crabapple** is the NYC-based author of *Drawing Blood* and *Brothers of the Gun* (with Marwan Hisham), which was long-listed for a National Book Award in 2018. Her art is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art. Her animations have been nominated for three Emmys and won an Edward R. Murrow Award. **Ruby Lal** is Professor of South Asian Studies at Emory University, Atlanta. She is the author of several books including the forthcoming *Vagabond Princess: The Great Adventures of Gulbadan*. **Session is full, wait list only, please.**

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →



Aug 18 – 24

Mo Morrow

Wiping the Windows, Making Marks

Modern humans live in a scientific era. But how do we define objective reality, scientific evidence or observable, measurable phenomena? As infants develop in language, we babble all the possible phonetic bits of all languages, but begin to prune off those sounds not mirrored by our caregivers. Similarly, we prune off sensory perceptions that receive no social validation, forming our shared understanding of the world around us. This week we will examine our frameworks of understanding and play with novel ways of seeing the natural world through art-making activities. **Mo Morrow** is a life-long educator and artist, specializing in supporting children with learning differences and their parents. She holds degrees in Studio Art and Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Space Science. She has been involved with the riding program at Ring Lake Ranch in various roles since 2012. She currently tutors children and teaches painting in watercolor in Colorado Springs. *Session is nearly full so register soon!*



Aug 25 – 31

Jimmy Hoke

Queering the Bible

How can we read the Bible in ways that center LGBTIA2Q+ experiences, ancient and modern? What does it mean to read biblical texts from queer perspectives? Instead of defending LGBTIA2Q+ folks from the passages typically used to “clobber” them, this session guides participants to use different strategies for reading the Bible that embody a queer politics of transformation and justice. **Dr. Jimmy Hoke** (he/they) is a teacher and scholar of queer and trans Biblical Studies. Dr. Hoke’s research focuses on reconstructing the queer folks who crafted their own theologies in the earliest assemblies of Christ-followers. Their book, *Feminism, Queerness, Affect, and Romans: Under God?*, uses these reconstructions to unsettle readings of Romans that focus only on Paul. Dr. Hoke publishes weekly queer commentaries on the Revised Common Lectionary in a project called “Queering the Lectionary.”



Thanks to our 2023 Volunteers

There are many things that make the Ring Lake Ranch experience so compelling for everyone who comes through the summer; one of the most important is the enthusiasm and dedication of the RLR volunteers. Their generous contributions of time and energy help keep the Ranch looking beautiful and running smoothly; their love and commitment help build the Ranch community each week and each season.

Our Volunteer Week crew at the opening of the season was small but mighty: Ken Blumer, Mike McKee, Allison Moe, Brian Starke, Dave Marsh, Randy Flipse, and Susan Tweit all pitched in to get the Ranch ready to open. Volunteers came to help during almost every week of the season, as well. Silhouan and Tiffany Alberts, Mia Webb, John Anderson, Gay and Rodney Howard, Beth and Joe Fecas, Kimberly Redding, William Redding, Mike Morris, Maria Battista, Becky Brown, Linda Goldsmith, Paul Vasile, Lesley and Glenn Stugelmayer, Ian and Kim Hamilton, Lynn Williamson, and Dan Hauk all helped out with a wide range of tasks: assisting in the kitchen, setting tables in the dining hall, mucking the corral, staining cabins, keeping up with Gift Shop inventory, and completing maintenance and repair projects.

We also had great help from young people working as staff assistants: Aryeh Alberts, Ellie Reichert, Sage Cramp, Holly Vetter, and Ben Blackmun. Thanks again to all of these great volunteers!

For our 2024 season, we already have a number of people signed up to volunteer but some spaces are still available during the season. We also need help during Volunteer Week (May 19th – 25th, 2024). If you are interested in participating in Volunteer Week or volunteering during the summer season, please get in touch with Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org or 888-458-5253.

Transportation Fees for 2024

We are happy to pick up guests from the Jackson Hole airport by prior arrangement. PLEASE SELECT YOUR FLIGHT TO ARRIVE PRIOR TO 3:00 P.M. Airport transport fees for the summer: \$120 per person one way, maximum \$200 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. Feel free to contact Alli at alli@ringlake.org or 307-455-2663 if you have any questions.

Changes to Registration Deposits

For many years, we asked guests to pay a flat deposit amount per guest, regardless of the cabin size. Over the last year, we have moved to a new, much improved registration tracking system. We managed to make that system work initially with our old deposit method but it required recalculating fees for every reservation that we entered. To take full advantage of the improvements in the new system, we need to take deposits as a percentage of the fees due. We apologize for any confusion. Please contact Alli at alli@ringlake.org or 307-455-2663 if you have any questions.

Scholarship Assistance

As always, our priority is to make sure that anyone who wants to attend a session at Ring Lake Ranch is able to do so. Please contact Andy at andy@ringlake.org or 888-458-5253 to inquire about financial support.

2024 SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS → → → →

If a session is full, we encourage you to ask to be put on the wait list. We often find that spots open up later in the year, so there are often opportunities to attend sessions that are listed as full. Also remember that scholarship help is available to anyone needing assistance with fees; please contact Andy Blackmun at andy@ringlake.org for our simple scholarship application.

2024 REGISTRATION



Facilities Improvements



At the same time that we are planning significant upgrades to the Ranch facilities, we continue to address the smaller needs around the grounds, as well. During the off-season last summer, a local contractor replaced the windows in the Living Room. The old windows were original to the 50+ year-old building and had warped beyond repair so that they could only be partially opened. They were also single-pane glass, so the afternoon sun often made the Living Room uncomfortably warm. The new windows address those issues; they open and close easily and, along with new curtains made by Ranch guest Judy Plows, keep the Living Room much cooler at the end of long summer days. Around the middle of this summer, we discovered that the septic system in front of cabin 7 had failed from old age. An excavation contractor replaced the system in a remarkably short time. The only significant issue with the replacement is that the new system was required by current codes to be much larger; the old system was sized for one cabin but served three cabins. Unfortunately, the only location for the new, larger leech field had to be down the hill under the area covered by the labyrinth. The contractor did his best to regrade the terrain but next summer we'll have to add a rock retaining wall around the site of the tank at cabin 7, rebuild the labyrinth, and reseed the area around the labyrinth. In any case, we are grateful for the financial resources provided by the RLR community over the years that let us address these projects quickly and with minimal stress.

2023 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 private bath \$1,461
 Basic cabin with shared bath \$1,265
 Large Family cabin with private bath \$1,528

YOUTH FEES FOR 6 DAY SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17) \$911
 Child (ages 12 and under) no charge

ADULT FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Basic lodging with private bath \$ 2,498
 Basic lodging with shared bath \$ 2,202
 Large Family cabin with private bath \$ 2,684

YOUTH FEES FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE SESSIONS

Youth (ages 13 – 17) \$ 1,571
 Child (ages 12 and under) no charge

All fees exclude sales & lodging taxes.

Contact Alli at alli@ringlake.org

or 307-455-2663 to inquire about daily and off-season rates. To guarantee a private room, contact Alli 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 require a 30% deposit of your total reservation rate. If you are unsure about your deposit amount, please call Alli at (307) 455-2663. 80% of your deposit is refundable up to 60 days in advance of the session for which you have registered. After that time, the deposit is refundable only if we can rebook your space in the session. 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?

(\$120 per person/trip or \$200/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:

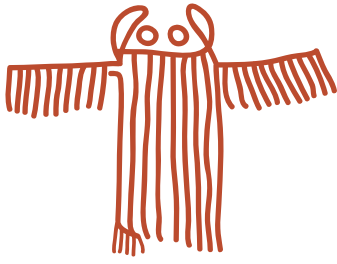
Ring Lake Ranch

P.O. Box 200760 (winter address) (888) 458-5253 toll free

Denver CO 80220 (307) 455-2663

alli@ringlake.org

alli@ringlake.org



RING LAKE RANCH

P.O. Box 806 • Dubois, WY 82513

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La Crosse, WI

For more information about our programs & the Ranch community
Please visit our website: www.ringlake.org

