



# the Ring Lake Carillon

RING LAKE RANCH • Dubois, Wyoming  
an ecumenical retreat and conference center

Fall • 2005

## From the Director

As I write, newscasters are announcing the 22nd tropical storm of the season joining forces with the 21st. We're overwhelmed--in fact, or in our hearts and minds--with floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, tornadoes, earthquakes or ferocious winds these past several months. The world seems in massive upheaval and the amount of pain and suffering more than we can imagine. A huge sense of powerlessness and helplessness grabs us, as we struggled to know how to help, or what to do. When all this chaos circles around us, our own personal insecurities are stirred up and come to the surface.

It seems we're in the midst of a crash course in vulnerability. The upheaval outside of us begins to enter right into our lives and homes. Being at Ring Lake Ranch can often seem like a respite from our usual lives.

And yet, this past summer, along with our huge sense of Henry's loss, the natural world joined into the upheaval. We saw all around us the effects of a heavy storm that struck in May. Ten inches of snow and high winds followed three inches of rain. Tree branches cracked off, or entire trees fell, blocking trails. Near the tepee rings above Ring Lake, a huge boulder left by the glacier in the far distant past, rolled and bounced down the hillside, smashing bushes, trees and a fence in its path, to find a new resting place.



Pema Chodron, an American Buddhist nun, has a wonderful book that seems to be a gift for today's experience, called When Things Fall Apart. Snatches of wisdom come jumping off the pages, most with a similar flavor and core belief. We can use difficult times in our lives "to either wake ourselves up or to put ourselves to sleep." She describes such times as challenges for spiritual warriors "to awaken their hearts."

It seems that our most common human response is to attempt to avoid upheaval and difficult times. Yet it's the hard times that try us and have the ability to be the ground out of which our growth emerges. Chodron says "the most heart-breaking thing is how we cheat ourselves of the present moment." So often we've heard that "now" is the only time we ever have, that we are only alive in the present moment. So perhaps that's the challenge of upheaval as well as the times when life is smooth and pleasant. Two sides of the same coin. We may decide we only want the "heads" but wisdom

seems to say that the "tails" will always be there. So can we be open to both.

Ring Lake has always been a place that offers the opportunity to stand back and gain perspective. Yet even the world at Ring Lake contains both sides of the coin of life. May it be a place that helps us find the value of whatever life holds.

~ Joan Guntzman

## WITH SADNESS

During the summers of 2003 and 2004, Dave Wells made a great contribution to Ring Lake Ranch with his knowledge and skill in a wide variety of maintenance work. At the same time Dave did everything he knew to battle his cancer diagnosis. On October 14, 2005, Dave died at the hospital in Lander. Our sympathy and prayers go out to Dave's wife, Gnat, whom you will remember as our Head Cook in 2004.

## Three Generations



During the session led by Alan and Jeanie Mebane in 2005, we had three generations of the expanding Mebane family—long associated with Ring Lake Ranch—with us for a few days: Anne Mebane-McWhirter, Alan Mebane, Jeanie Mebane and Ann's daughter Sara McWhirter.

## ACCIDENTAL OMISSION

In noting donations to Ring Lake Ranch in our Spring, 2005 Carillon, we inadvertently omitted reporting the generous donation in the Louise (\$500 and above) category, of Herb and Libby Ware.

We apologize for our omission and want the Wares and all of our donors to know how grateful we are for their generosity.

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## A KAHIN CONNECTION



For several weeks this past summer, it was a delight to have Maggie's grandson Owen Kahin, 13, son of Maggie's son Brian, volunteering his time at Ring Lake. Here's Owen, who participated in a number of maintenance tasks, helping Mary Murphy with the replacement of the shower in Cabin 4.

## NEW DUBOIS RESIDENTS

We congratulate Lynn Cunningham, Episcopal Priest and Lawyer, who was installed as new Rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Dubois on September 25, 2005. Lynn has long been associated with Ring Lake Ranch, recently serving on the Board of Directors. Lynn and wife, Dorothy Remy, have become residents of Dubois, moving here from Washington DC.

### \* \* JOB OPPORTUNITY \* \*

With a readjustment of the management positions of Ring Lake Ranch, we are presently looking for a Manager of Staff and Ranch facilities.

If you have interest in this position, please contact Board Member, Paul Vogelheim (307) 734-8944 - or email [voge@blissnet.com](mailto:voge@blissnet.com)

## Dear Friends Of Ring Lake Ranch,

Summer art camps are very popular these days. People send their kids off to learn how to be artists, to paint, to sing, to write, to dance. How about learning to be artists of life itself!

Here's a quote I recently came across by Janice Stone:

"The most invisible creators I know of are those artists whose medium is life itself.

The ones who express the inexpressible--without brush, hammer, clay or guitar. They neither paint nor sculpt--their medium is their being. Whatever their presence touches has increased life. They see and don't have to draw. They are the artists of being alive."

"The artists of being alive." What a testimony that is to a grateful life. Henry Everding had that quality about him, of gratitude for just being alive, and it was infectious.

One of the wonderful aspects of Ring Lake Ranch is that it allows us to get away from our usual routine, from the concrete and asphalt of daily living, and experience real ground, to make a pun on what Tillich called "the ground of being." God is certainly just as present in the city as in the mountains, but somehow we are changed, we are made more open, in the presence of wilderness. We discover anew what it means to be an "artist of being alive." Gratitude begets generosity which begets gratitude which begets generosity.

Ann and I are so thankful for Ring Lake Ranch and the people we have met there. We want to give and give generously and the more we give the more we get.

Forty years ago next summer Maggie opened the gate of Ring Lake Ranch to a group of teenagers from the East Coast. How many lives have been touched by the Ranch since 1966! My own life and the lives of our family certainly have been.

In gratitude for all that the Ranch has meant to so many, and to help secure its future, please join us and use the enclosed envelope for your donation to Ring Lake Ranch. Help all of us, especially those who will come to the Ranch in the future, to be "artists of being alive."

~ **Lin Knight**  
**Member, Board of Directors**



LUNCH RIDE TO MINER'S CABIN

## FRIENDS OF RING LAKE VOLUNTEER CORPS

Ring Lake has been fortunate over the years to have a number of very dedicated volunteers spend time at the ranch. Their presence, hard work and frequently their special expertise have contributed much to the ranch and have saved considerable money. Recognizing the important contributions which volunteers make and as a part of our ongoing effort to keep the ranch experience affordable, the Board of Directors has decided to initiate a more formalized volunteer program which we are calling the Volunteer Corps. We encourage you to consider applying to be a part of this program.

Volunteers will be provided with room and board. Except in special circumstances, usually involving certain kinds of expertise and specific projects, we are asking volunteers to commit to at least two weeks, and to plan on working a minimum of six hours per day, five days per week. If couples apply, we will be counting on both parties to work as indicated above.

Time slots may fill quickly so please apply as early as possible.

(Questions and applications contact  
ringlake@wyoming.com )

## A Ring Lake Reflection

**"I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in."**

~John Muir

Perhaps this is the most important journey we take--into our own selves. Our connection and involvement with the natural world at Ring Lake Ranch encourages and supports such journeys.



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## WISH LIST

Along with on-going need for financial support, Ring Lake Ranch has need for the items below. If you have access to any of these items in good condition, please think of us.

Horse Support: Winter pasture costs are \$40 a month per horse.

New Vehicles: Any contributions to their purchase (already done) would be greatly appreciated.

Good table saw

Heavy duty weed whacker or brush cutter

Bob Cat small tractor for patching roads, mucking corrals, etc.

ATV for moving things around the Ranch, hauling hay, etc.

Chipping for the Ranch road

A floating dock

A winch for the truck

## GIRLFRIENDS



Miss Agnes, who seems to love hanging out with young riders, became the favorite of several young guests this summer. Here she is sampling a treat from Nan Marsh.

## NON-SEMINAR SESSIONS

June 2 – 4	St. John's Church Retreat, Jackson
June 10	Board Meeting
June 11 – 17	Elder High School, Cincinnati
June 25 – July 1	Elder High School, Cincinnati
July 9 – 15	Elder High School, Cincinnati

## Henry Everding Memorial

As many of you already know, newly-elected president of the Board of Director's and long-time ranch affiliate, Henry Everding, was killed in February 2005 while climbing in Chile. His death has been a struggle for the many people who knew and loved him. At two pm, June 19, 2006, family and friends of Henry are invited to come together at the ranch for a memorial service and celebration of Henry's life. Participants are invited to arrive at the ranch on Sunday, June 18th, and can stay for as much of the week as they would like. The event is designed to provide everyone who is interested a time to tell stories, laugh, and grieve for the loss of Henry while being in a landscape he loved. Those interested should contact Ann Mebane for reservations (pika@tritnet.net, or (307)587-4597).

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION BORG/CROSSAN SESSION

Last year, due to early registrants, the Marcus Borg/John Dominic Crossan session was almost full when the fall Carillon went to press; therefore a number of folks who sent their registrations in shortly after the Carillon came out were disappointed. Some of these people chose to remain on the waitlist in hopes of getting a spot. To address the situation this year and to make registration for these outstanding seminars as fair as possible, we've adopted the following policy. Those on the waitlist from last year were notified and given a chance to register for the 2006 session for the number of slots they had on the waitlist for 2005. At the time of this printing there are approximately 19 places left. To make sure that everyone has received their Carillon and has had time to consult their calendars, no additional registrations will be accepted for the 2006 Borg/Crossan session postmarked before November 30, 2005. After that time, the session spots will be filled when we receive your deposit and completed registration by postmark date.

Please note that the Gene Tucker session has only 11 spaces left.

## SCHOLARSHIP

Thanks to a generous couple that wants to help introduce new young clergy families to Ring Lake Ranch, we have available two \$500 scholarships for two separate persons for any available seminars this summer. Requirements are that the petitioners meet three criteria:

- Be a person in ministry
- With a young family
- Who has never been to Ring Lake Ranch

To apply, please contact Joan at [ringlake@wyoming.com](mailto:ringlake@wyoming.com) or (505) 265-8990 until mid-May. After that call the Ranch at (307)455-2663.

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# 2006 SUMMER SCHEDULE

June 4 - 10  
June 19  
June 20 - 24

Available  
Memorial for Henry Everding  
Week open to celebrate Henry  
with no formal evening sessions

July 2 - 8

PHIL WOGAMAN

## PERIL AND PROMISE: RELIGION AND POLITICS

While religion and politics have always interacted to some extent, in recent years religion has become an unusually important battleground in American and world politics. The influence of religion in public life can be very dangerous, but it has been and can be a force for good as well. Dr. Wogaman will explore both the dangers and the hopeful possibilities.

**PHILIP WOGAMAN** is interim president and visiting professor of Christian ethics at Iliff School of Theology, and professor emeritus of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. He is past president of the Society of Christian Ethics of the US and Canada, and has seventeen published books. In his ten year pastorate at the historic Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, DC, he served as pastor to President Clinton and other political leaders of both parties.

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July 16 - 28

ROBERTA & RICHARD BONDI

## SPIRITUALITY AND THE EMOTIONS

A look at five basic human emotions and their impact on our personal lives and spirituality. We'll examine how emotions affect our personal style and manner of being in the world, as well as our relationship to God and other persons. We'll then take a closer look at Anger, Depression, Anxiety, Contempt, and Joy. Our conversation will be informed by contemporary psychological studies, and by the Sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers of the early Christian Church.

**ROBERTA BONDI** is Professor of Church History, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, and author of numerous books.

**RICHARD BONDI** is a Pastoral Psychotherapist and the Executive Director of the Emmanuel Center for Pastoral Counseling, Atlanta, GA.

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July 30 - Aug. 11

GENE TUCKER

## RENEWAL IN WILDERNESS: UNDERSTANDING SACRED GROUND

The 40th anniversary of Ring Lake Ranch is a good occasion to reflect on issues concerning sacred ground. Evidence in ancient artifacts as well as the experience of those who come to the Ranch show that it is a sacred place. This seminar will consider the meaning of sacred place in the Bible and various religious traditions, including those of Native Americans. Why are some places and lands considered holy and others not? How do these understandings and realities affect our spiritual and physical lives, and even our politics?

**GENE TUCKER** is Professor of Old Testament Emeritus of Candler School of Theology where he taught for 25 years. A graduate of Yale Divinity School and Yale University, Gene has authored or been the editor of 19 books. A United Methodist minister, Gene is active in the Society of Biblical Literature. An avid fisherman and outdoorsman, Gene is presently working on issues concerning the Bible and the environment. Long associated with Ring Lake Ranch, Gene served several terms as Board President.

August 13 - 19

CARTER HEYWARD

## HORSES AS SPIRITUAL TEACHERS

In connecting with horses, both on the ground and riding, we'll explore some of the lessons these relationships offer. In addition to being with the horses, our time together will involve silence and contemplation, journaling, story-telling, and conversation.

**CARTER HEYWARD**, author of *Flying Changes: Horses as Spiritual Teachers* (2005), *God in the Balance: Christian Spirituality in Times of Terror* (2002), *Saving Jesus from Those Who Are Right: Rethinking What It Means to be Christian* (1999), and other books, is the Robbins Professor of Theology Emeritus at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA.

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August 20 - 26

ESTHER DE WAAL

## Mindfulness

To take time to be aware, attentive, mindful of the present moment, of our selves, of the world around us, is not a luxury. It is a necessity. In lives that are over-busy or pulled in too many directions, in a society that applauds over-work and awards the competitive, this seminar will challenge that, through words, the visual, the imagination, the use of poetry and photography. Most importantly will be time for silence.

**ESTHER DEWAAL**, an Anglican lay-woman, lives on the borders of England and Wales in the countryside where she grew up. She writes, travels and gives retreats, gardens and enjoys her increasing numbers of grandchildren. Her books include *Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict*, *Living with Contradiction*, *Every Earthly Blessing*, *The Celtic Way of Prayer*, *The Way of Simplicity*, and *Lost in Wonder: The Spiritual Art of Attentioness*.

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August 27 - Sept. 2

MARCUS BORG AND  
JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN

## JESUS AND PAUL

This seminar will address Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God, and how Paul proclaimed it across and against the Roman Empire.

**MARCUS BORG** is Hunderer Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University and author of many books, including the best selling *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, *The God We Never Knew*, and *The Heart of Christianity*.

**JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN** is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Religious Studies, DePaul University, Chicago, past Co-Chair of the Jesus Seminar, and author of many books on the historical Jesus and earliest Christianity, including *Excavating Jesus: Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts*, co-authored with archeologist, Jonathan L. Reed.

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Sept. 4 - 10

FRED WEBB

## FLYFISHING AND THEOLOGY FAITH - FELLOWSHIP - FLYFISHING

Though not a regular seminar session, guests are welcome to register with Fred Webb for this program.  
(540) 962-1300 or email fsflyfish@aol.com



## Henry Everding Equine Endowment

In tribute to Henry Everding's memory and our deep love for him, the Board of Ring Lake Ranch has established the **Henry Everding Equine Endowment**, affectionately known as Henry's Horse Program. It is an endowment to ensure the future of the riding program at the Ranch by supporting the animals, facilities and other related costs. We want to guarantee that generations of people will be able to experience the joy of seeing Crowheart Butte from the top of the Ridge, or miles of Wyoming badlands from the meadows of Little Whiskey. We list here the generous donors who have contributed to this fund as we went to press.

Edgar & Becky Adams  
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Becky Tucker and Erik Esborg  
Gene & Charky Tucker  
Ruth H Venable  
Dana and Linda Wilbanks  
Dean and Pepita Wilkinson  
Dennis & Lenore Williams

**Return Service Requested**

## FROM THE BACK PORCH

A career change and a desire to pause from a busy life in Washington State gave me a rare opportunity to work at Ring Lake Ranch and experience the Wind River wilderness.

From the town of Dubois, I traveled East on Highway 26, turned right onto 411, and began the seven-mile drive to the Ranch. The rough, gravel road ascends through landscape that lies in stark contrast to the Pacific Northwest. The terrain is dry, covered with sagebrush, and strewn with rocks; the only touch of color is from prairie flowers that dot the hillside. Mighty by nature, these little flowers are challenged daily by strong winds, sun and high temperatures. The Badland Mountains loom jagged and red in the background, magnificent reminders of glacier movement in this area years ago.

Upon arriving at the Ranch, and in spite of a sign that clearly indicates which building is the office, I head straight for the back porch. Eventually, I would observe repeatedly that guests always gravitated to the back porch for directions and to say "Hello". For staff and guests alike, community at Ring Lake Ranch begins at the back porch.



From the back porch there is a bird's eye view of Trail Lake, the comings and goings of the parking lot, bunnies, birds, and horses ambling down the ridge to graze nearby. Nonny, a precious Scottie and companion to everyone, meets and greets with a body wiggle and wagging tail. He, too, enjoys the view and frequent back scratches. Staff and guests get a chance to visit while everyone waits their turn to phone home, bask in the

sunshine, or watch as craft projects are completed. The empty food boxes make great footstools and, if you sit quietly, you will see a little mouse drinking from the dog's water bowl. Often, contractors will linger to visit with coffee cup in hand. The best seats in the house to observe rainbows, rainstorms, sunsets, and snow fall are the green porch chairs.

Since it houses our cleaning supply and food storage rooms, washing machine, and freezers, the back porch is the heartbeat of daily Ranch activity. Every day wet towels are removed from the washer and hung on the clothes line, freezer doors are in constant motion to meet the demand of three meals, and the bang of the kitchen screen door becomes an all-to-familiar sound that begins at 6:00 a.m. On any given day, I would see the junior staff, affectionately referred to as Mountain Muffins, coordinate chores, nap in the sunshine, tell jokes, curl up with a book, lick the cake batter from a mixing bowl, talk on the phone, read letters, and share stories from home. Everyone cherished the time they could find from busy schedules to sink into a green chair to rest, chat, or simply enjoy a few minutes of silence.

For staff, the back porch was a gathering place to hear updates on Ranch activities, find out what's for dinner, discuss maintenance projects, coordinate cabin cleanings, and the town run. The back porch was a safe haven to poke fun at one another, share stories, offer words of encouragement, and restore our sense of humor. Within the logs and boards of the back porch, words and silence alike strengthened the bonds of friendships.

In addition to the privilege of working with an amazing group of women and a precious little Scottie, I have heartfelt memories, sights, and sounds from the back porch that are etched in my mind forever. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1

~ Julie Nelson, Staff 2005 Season

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