

Coming Home

News from The Bishop's Ranch

Summer 2018



READ campers lining up for fun.

Reaching Out to Our Neighbor *by Rev. Pat Moore, Chaplain at The Bishop's Ranch*

A lawyer seeking to justify himself before Jesus quotes the law: “love thy neighbor as thyself.” “Who is my neighbor?” he asks. Indeed.

Clearly, at The Bishop's Ranch we serve a big geographic neighborhood. People come to the Ranch from all over the Bay area, Northern California and beyond. And, closer to us geographically, the Ranch has long been a gathering place for local environmental and neighborhood groups working to preserve and enhance our watershed. The chapel community is made up of Sonoma County folks who find their way to the Ranch in various mysterious ways. Local yoga groups gather here, and a whole variety of non-profits from the area hold meetings and retreats here. We have longstanding, and in some ways, complex relationships with our nearby and next-door neighbors: the dairy (some of their cattle graze on our land), the farmers, the vineyards, and wineries along the road. Our Gina's Orchard Environmental Ed program is offered in conjunction with Westside Elementary School, where some of our own children have studied. We'd have to answer the lawyer by saying that our neighborhood is geographically large. And our relationships run deep. We've been here since 1947 and our relationship with Bay Area parishes as well as our nearby neighbors goes back many decades.

Right now, some of our local Sonoma County neighbors find themselves in stressful times, and we're thankful to be able to reach out to them in one small concrete way. For

the past three years, we've held a half-day camp primarily for Latino students enrolled in Healdsburg Unified School District's special summer language enrichment program.

When we first met with school district officials four years ago our idea was to offer a reading camp for students. It turned out that the District was offering its own summer language enrichment program in the mornings, and the idea they proposed was that we offer a regular day camp to their students, most of whom had never been to camp. And so READ Camp was born—an afternoon camp with a variety of activities, including this last year, swimming and water safety instruction by certified YMCA instructors. (This fills a particular need for these students, who come from families not usually taught swimming but who live near a river.)

In March when I went to meet with school administrators I learned that there will be no summer school. (The fires in Sonoma County resulted in lower tax income and school cutbacks.)

This setback offered us an opportunity: a full-day camp with some reading instruction -like we dreamed about four years ago! The Healdsburg School District is offering us great support, providing a bus for transportation and sending out notices to all the free and low-cost lunch students, and collecting registrations. Reaching out to these neighbors has brought us into relationships with other neighbors: Corazon Healdsburg, the Healdsburg Community

Continued on page 4

The Annual Fund – You are Making a Difference

We have recently completed quite a few projects made possible by your generous support of our Annual Fund.

New Hardwood Flooring and Furniture for St. John's Meeting House



A Ranch supporter and long-time participant in Women Making Music offered to donate funds to replace the Meeting House carpet (if we could finish the project before their group arrived on March 22nd). Accepting the challenge, we decided to use additional money from the Annual Fund to upgrade to hardwood flooring. The difference is amazing.



Once the new flooring was in we added flexible indoor-outdoor furniture that is comfortable and easy to move and store. It also allowed us to repurpose the couch and love seat that were in the Meeting House to replace the sagging futons in Cottages 3 and 4.



Welcome Sign & Pedestrian Safety

We have installed a lighted "Welcome" sign which can be seen from the parking lot below the office.



As part of our pedestrian safety program, we are doing several things to make the Ranch more pedestrian friendly. Low-voltage pathway downlights were added to guide both guests and staff safely to and from the parking lot at night, and overgrown shrubbery was removed so pedestrians and drivers can see each other clearly. Permanent traffic barriers were installed at the top and bottom of the center road leading past the chapel. This reduces vehicle traffic in the center of the campus and keeps guests and staff safe.

New Parcel Box

We upgraded our mailbox to a large parcel box, allowing us to have smaller UPS, USPS and FedEx parcels delivered securely without driving onto campus. Larger packages are now delivered to the maintenance shop to avoid truck traffic through the campus center. This has significantly reduced the large vehicle traffic, lessening distraction for guests.

All these projects were made possible by your donations to the Annual Fund. We could not do this without you. We have reached nearly half our \$300,000 goal for 2018. Be part of the community of support; use the enclosed envelope, or visit www.bishopsranch.org/support/.

Staff News



If you have visited the Ranch in the past couple months, you may have had the pleasure of meeting Julie Miller. She joined us in late February as part of The Bishop's Ranch hosting staff. Julie has been a professional naturalist for outdoor education schools and the National Park Service. She followed her husband to Sonoma County from Yosemite and pursued a lifelong interest in blending the contemplative life and her love of creation in studies of theology, spiritual direction and retreat leadership. When you meet Julie, she'll want to hear your stories... how you might be encountering the Spirit... or what kind of scat you've seen on the trails! She has been a great addition to our Host team.

The Ranch has welcomed a few other new staff members as well. In January, Aspen Santillan took over as our Bookkeeper. In February, Cara Anderson came on as the Advancement Assistant, working closely with Jack Dowling. Brandon McGinnis and Matt Lopez have joined the Facilities and Land Department.

Johncaleb Sarsfield decided to leave the Ranch after being a Land and Maintenance Manager for over four years. He will be welcoming his first baby in the summer and wanted to pursue a business with his wife that would allow him to be home more. We are sad to see him go but wish him the best of luck!



Upcoming Ranch Programs

Writing in Ordinary Time with Laurie Glover, MA, PhD

August 12-17, 2018 &
August 26-31, 2018

Ranch Service Day – Fire Fuel Removal

August 11, 2018, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Fall Hike

October 20, 2018, 9:30 am-3:00 pm

Circles of Trust

November 5-7, 2018

Guardian Angels, Goddesses & Spirit Guides with Lisa Thorpe

November 7-8, 2018

A Day of Prayer for the Life of the World

November 10, 2018, 9:30 am-4:00 pm

Yoga with Marie Hirsch

November 10, 2018, 9:30 am-4:00 pm

Song and Silence with Devi Mathieu

November 16-18, 2018

Silent Days in Advent

December 7-14, 2018

Wisdom of the Heart with Kayleen Asbo, PhD

December 14-16, 2018

Young Adults Retreat

December 14-16, 2018

Epiphany Reflection Day

January 5, 2019, 9:30 am-4:30 pm

The California School of Celtic Consciousness with John Philip Newell

January 29-31, 2019

Ranch Quilt Retreat

February 10-14, 2019

Please visit the program page on our website for more information or to register: www.bishopsranch.org



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Coming Home

A newsletter about life at The Bishop's Ranch, a retreat and conference center for all ages.

Send correspondence and address corrections to:
The Bishop's Ranch
Coming Home
5297 Westside Road
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Tel. 707.433.2440
Fax. 707.433.3431
email: info@bishopsranch.org
www.bishopsranch.org

A Makeover for the Ranch Office + a New Ranch Store

In March, the Ranch Office received a bit of a facelift! Removing the cubicle walls and large desk at the main entrance allowed us to create a more functional and out-of-sight work room (i.e., copier, paper, office supplies and the like) behind a divider and develop a small Ranch Store that sells our cookbooks, t-shirts, water bottles and other Bishop's Ranch goods.

In the upgrade, we were able to move Leda, our Reservations Coordinator, into a private office where she can do the important work of managing the Ranch calendar and reservations.

This opened the main area to create a warm, welcoming entrance for our guests to check-in, ask questions of the host or peruse the new store.

Resident Artist Lisa Thorpe created a custom art piece for the new space as well. We hope you'll stop to say hello and take a look on your next visit to the ranch.



Aaron Wright and Pat Moore show off new Ranch swag

Continued from page 1

Center, parent groups, the Santa Rosa YMCA, and we'll have a local teacher on staff and some volunteer language mentors. The READ Camp has been supported financially by a generous anonymous donor and by donations from the Acorn society, raising over \$11,000. In addition, this year with a greatly expanded program and number of students served, we've received a \$10,000 grant to help cover costs.

These efforts are how we're answering the lawyer's question, and living into our own modest response to the more important question that Jesus posed. In the story of "the Good Samaritan," Jesus asked, "Which one of these was neighbor?" The one who showed mercy.



READ campers at play

Become a Steward of Tomorrow: Impact The Bishop's Ranch with a Lasting Gift

Planned giving allows anyone concerned with the wise use of his or her personal resources to make a considered choice about their ultimate disposition. With a planned gift you can:

- Make a larger charitable gift than you thought possible
- Take care of the financial needs of your family first
- Reduce your income tax and even avoid capital gains taxes
- Diversify your investment portfolio
- Leave a legacy without giving up assets

If you wish to create a lasting legacy and remember The Bishop's Ranch in your will or estate plan, contact Jack Dowling, Advancement Director at 707.433.2440 x105 or visit www.bishopsranch.org/support/legacy/ for additional information.

The Bishop's Ranch Legacy Circle

Founded in 2011 by Ranch supporters who include the Ranch in their estate plans. The Legacy Circle has the goal of supporting long-term financial health of The Bishop's Ranch.

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*Volunteers help with tomato planting*

Farm to (Buffet) Table *by Matt Kissmann*

Harvest time or planting time? I can never decide which time of year I like best here at the Ranch. Harvest brings with it the rich flavors and nourishment cultivated over the course of the summer, while planting time brings with it all the anticipation of the good things that could make their way to our table. Of course harvest would be the easy choice as the fruits of our labor light up the pleasure centers in our brains, but prepping and pampering our seedlings and ensuring the correct tith takes so much out of us, we can't help but look forward to the boons to come. It's this work, as in so many things that we do here, that make us enjoy all the more the gifts bestowed upon us when our plants are ready. It's really the full cycle of cultivation to fruition- of seed to fruit and back again- that reminds us of the rhythm of our own lives. With care, patience, intention and trust, great things may come to delight our hearts (or taste buds).

Now, I know what you're thinking: "That's all well and good, but will there be tomatoes?" Fret not; the tomatoes are here to stay, as they're a staff and guest favorite alike. We just can't resist their beautiful balance of acid and sweet and how homegrown (or Ranch-grown) ones far outshine their store-bought cousins. We'll also be growing the Ranch stalwarts of cucumbers, melons (my favorite), zucchini, kale, potatoes, and winter squash. We've added more herbs and a variety of peppers for a bit of spice and flavor to round it all out. We're not trying anything completely new, but we are trying some new cultivars for a sense of newness and in our constant search for varieties that are well suited

to our climate and soil. This can be exciting in its own right as new colors and flavors of old favorites show up in the buffet line.

I write this and we've had late rains and cold snaps that have delayed planting, but we already have the winter squash, potatoes, kale, and some zucchini in the ground. We're busy laying irrigation, prepping for trellising, and nurturing the seedlings of all the rest. Weeds and gophers are our death and taxes, so at least we have something we can count on.

What are your favorite things the Ranch grows? Is there anything we don't grow, but you wish we did? Feel free to reach out to me directly and give me your comments and wishes: matt@bishopsranch.org.

*Ranch Hands Quilters enjoy a delicious meal*

New Men's Retreat a Success



Some members of The Men of Grace

Ever since the Bishop Myers-led men's retreats of the 1960's, The Bishop's Ranch has been wanting to offer a weekend of reflection and renewal among men. In the ensuing years, the Ranch has hosted various parishes in the Diocese of California—St. John's, Oakland; Church of the Resurrection, Pleasant Hill; The Men of Grace, San Francisco—conducting their own men's retreats; this spring, the Ranch hosted its own, "Weaving the Tapestry of Our Lives."

Leaders Hari Meyers, renowned local story teller, and Gordon Pugh, life coach and improv artist, brought about what attendees report was a profoundly moving and transformative experience, starting with this call: "Now is the time, when men's roles are being questioned and challenged, for each of us to articulate the

story we tell ourselves about our own lives. Who are we in relation to our life's goal, to women, to our families, our daily work, to some sense of deity or purpose in our lives?"

The retreat opened with movement and sound, and then the process of uncovering stories began through a combination of sharing answers to provocative questions posed by Gordon and retellings of foundational cultural myths from Greek and Norse mythology by Hari. In the archetypal stories, one participant wrote, "We were able to recognize ourselves and to begin to see the patterns that move through us all."

Another participant reflected, "We were able to explore the stories we tell ourselves, and distinguish those stories which reinforce our limitations from those which offer the possibility of expansion." Another wrote, "We felt safe enough to risk sharing old wounds and hurts and to explore possible healings and directions for growth." All agreed that they had shared not only deep psychological experiences but spiritually supportive ones as well.

Where is my name?

Beginning with this issue we will only publish names of donors in our Annual Report. When we began publishing Coming Home in 1996, a year's worth of donor names took up less than a page. To our blessing, we now publish three or four pages of names twice a year. We have also been publishing an Annual Report since 2009 with a list of all donors for that year.

By not having a list of donor names in the newsletter we are able to reduce the number of pages and make it cost effective to publish in color. This will allow us to better show you the great things that are happening here.

Get the Digital Version Instead

Switch to the electronic version of the newsletter and green up your mailbox. Over 3,200 people are now receiving our electronic newsletter. This saves paper and other resources, and also benefits recipients of the digital version with links to information in that issue. The Ranch is committed to reducing the amount of printed material it produces. To join the movement email advancement@bishopsranch.org and provide us with your name, address and email.

If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, or want to update your contact information, please email: info@bishopsranch.org.

The Bishop's Ranch Wish List

- Sheets-Twin or Double-new, preferably white
- Towels and Washcloths-new, preferably white or off-white
- Pots and skillets, preferably stainless steel
- AED
- Hand trowels
- 6 cu ft wheel barrows
- Hand pruners & loppers
- Garden/utility carts
- Log splitter
- Commercial battery-powered string trimmer (preferably Stihl)
- Utility trailer
- Vehicles in good working order: Mini van, 9 passenger type
- Mobility scooter

A monetary or in-kind gift helps Ranch guests have a more comfortable and productive stay, and helps the Ranch staff improve services to guests.



The Bishop's Ranch

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Recipes from The Bishop's Ranch Kitchen

Beet, Apple & Cress Salad with Curry Vinaigrette

Serves 8-10 people

We have been serving this recipe often on Meatless Mondays and it is a crowd favorite. We consistently get requests for this salad from returning groups.

Salad:

- 1 lb. beets
- 1/2 cup currants
- 6 scallions, thinly sliced
- 2 large bunches watercress, or spinach
- 2 apples, thinly sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced on diagonal
- 3/4 cup walnuts, toasted & roughly chopped

Curry Vinaigrette Dressing:

- 1 clove garlic
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 2 tsp. curry powder
- 1/2 tsp. fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 6 Tbsp. olive oil

Roast beets, peel, cut into wedges and dress separately.

Plump currants in hot water, then drain before adding to salad.

Slice apples and dress separately to keep from discoloring.

Toss salad together with everything but the beets. Serve on platter and distribute the beets on top of the salad so as not to turn everything red. Scatter walnuts on top or serve on the side.