

# Coming Home

News from The Bishop's Ranch

Spring 2019



Paul Vasile and Generations Camp



Megan Anderson, Ranch Chaplain

## Spirit Songs

by Jack Dowling, Advancement Director

Recently I was sleeping outside in the redwoods near a creek in the western part of Sonoma County. Before drifting off, I heard a single frog call out, shortly its song was followed by a chorus of other frogs. Something would cause them to go silent and then one frog would start up, again echoed by a chorus of neighboring frogs.

That rhythm of call and response reminded me of the wonderful music we made in the first few weeks of camp with Paul Vasile of Music that Makes Community. The music Paul shared is taught without sheet music in a call and response manner.

Laying under the redwoods, listening to the frogs, one of the songs started running through my head. *Courage* is song that comes from the South African anti-apartheid movement that people sang in the face of challenges. In the Chapel of St. George, Paul taught us the song, singing, "Courage" which we echoed, "Courage." Then Paul sang, "My friend" and we echoed, "my friend." Together we continued, "You do not walk alone." The second verse continued in the same fashion with Paul singing, "We will" echoed by

*Continued on page 5*

## Let Me Introduce Myself

by Megan Anderson, Chaplain at The Bishop's Ranch

I am absolutely thrilled to be serving as the new Residential Host and Chaplain at The Bishop's Ranch. From the moment that I first read the job description, I have felt deeply drawn to this ministry. The Ranch's mission of nourishing people's body, mind, and spirit, while bringing them closer to God, spiritual practice, and community, aligns perfectly with my passion for ministry.

In addition to being an ordained Episcopal Priest, I am also a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner and a Group Fitness Instructor. I spent last year in Seattle cultivating a holistic wellness ministry practice with clients, churches, and retreat groups. Prior to this, I served for five years as the Missioner For Fresh Expressions at Trinity Cathedral, in Sacramento.

I graduated from UC Davis with a degree in Religious Studies in 2009, and completed a Master's of Divinity at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale in 2013. As a young adult I worked on the Camp Noel Porter Episcopal Summer Camp Staff for five years, and after college I served for a year in the Episcopal Service Corps in Boston. I have an older brother who is a lawyer in New

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BREAD Camp: *Explorers*

Summer Camp 2019



BREAD Camp: *Adventurers*



Family Camp



Generations Camp



BREAD Camp: *Discoverers*





## Growing Into Leadership at Camp

*by Frank Klopotoski, Assistant Camp Director*

To kick off the summer, our camp staff comes together at the Ranch for a week of leadership training and fun activities that prepare them for the weeks ahead. Together we participate in team building exercises, discuss inclusion philosophies that help build community, go over camper scenarios like home sickness and picky eaters, and much more. Training week helps counselors figure out their leadership style and equips them with the skills needed to oversee activities and discussions with campers of all ages.

Isaac Roth, who was completely new to summer camps at the Ranch, reflected that “being on camp staff has introduced me to a community that cares deeply and wholly for each other in a way I never expected.” Becca Robinson, a long-time Generations and BREAD camper, said that she keeps coming back to staff camps at the Ranch because she doesn’t want to let the BREAD community go. “Being a counselor allows me to give campers the same positive and loving experience I had. It’s so great to work with an enthusiastic team of counselors that come together because we all want to make every camper’s experience one that they can’t help but come back for,” she said.

If you love working on a team, the outdoors, singing, having fun, and making a difference in children’s lives, then our summer camp staff may be the place for you. Come be a part of this unique and incredible opportunity! Applications for the 2020 camp season will be posted on our website in December.



## READ On...

*by Greta Mesics, READ Camp Education Coordinator*

So, what really happens at READ Camp? Reading contests? Speed reading lessons? Fluency quizzes? Comprehension guidance? Rewards? Recognition? Prizes? Big and impressive charts of who read how much how fast? Nope. None of that at all.

Stories happen at READ Camp. Reading is one of the ways that our stories are shared and perpetuated. That is why reading is important. Reading is a vehicle for sharing stories. READ Camp promotes the enJOYment of that vehicle through reading itself and through relationships.

At READ Camp reading happens. Our campers and counselors explore written stories through the performance of Reader’s Theater, through quiet listening to Harry Potter being read aloud in the beauty of our Chapel, through afternoon chill time with book after book to peruse, through hikes on the Ranch with a book basket of nonfiction reference reading, and through conversations about books.

And, there are delicious meals, campfire songs, soccer games, shrinky dinky projects and art, swim lessons and friends. Our counselors’ engagement with our campers is the real work of this camp. Our campers love our counselors.

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## THE BISHOP'S RANCH STAFF

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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  
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[www.bishopsranch.org](http://www.bishopsranch.org)

## Staff News

We are pleased to announce that Aaron Wright has the new job title of Associate Director. Since May of 2017 the Ranch has been fortunate to have Aaron ably fulfill the position of Hospitality Director, leading the staff teams that make the Ranch ready for the hundreds of retreats, camps and conferences the Ranch hosts each year. During this time Aaron's responsibilities have expanded and the new title of Associate Director more fully describes his role. Thank you, Aaron, for your guidance of the Ranch's ministry with such energy and thoughtfulness!

Mari Gonzalez, our Housekeeping Manager, graduates! A number of Ranch Staff joined Mari's family and friends to watch her receive her GED diploma on May 1st. She was one of the students to give a graduation address and she radiated confidence and joy. "I can happily say that with great effort and dedication I achieved that goal and now I have my High School Equivalency. Also, I feel I am a strong person and now I believe that goals can be achieved if I fight and work for them." Congratulations Mari!



*Graduate Mari Gonzalez*



*Baby Solomon*

Sean and Caroline Swift celebrate the birth of their first grandchild, Solomon Everett Kingsbury Swift. Daughter Calen, her partner Myron, and the baby are doing well. When asked what it's like to spend time with Solomon, Sean replied, "He's just amazing and a lot of fun to look at. You see him taking in the world and he's brand new and he experiences the world as brand new. Each new feeling . . . the wind blowing and the patterns of the leaves moving with the sunshine on them make Solomon so rapt. I get to re-experience the world through him. He's just a little miracle."

Ivan Thorpe, son of Jack Dowling and Lisa Thorpe, shares with the Ranch community that, "I am attending Unity College, 'America's Environmental College,' in Unity, Maine to study Adventure-Based Environmental Education. After spending many summers honing my leadership skills as a counselor at BREAD camp and teaching as a classroom aide at West Side Elementary School, I found my love of working with children in the outdoors. At Unity, the Adventure-Based Environmental Education program takes a hands-on approach to teaching us the skills to make outdoor adventures into a meaningful learning and growth experience for participants. I am very excited to get started and see where this interesting path takes me, and to explore the beautiful, lush woodlands of rural Maine!"



**Spirit Song** *Continued from page 1*

"we will," "Walk with you," "walk with you," then together, "And sing your spirit home."

I have been ruminating on those words for several weeks, not just the support and succor the song offered in its original context, but how the words speak of life at the Ranch.

When people visit The Bishop's Ranch, they could hear, "Welcome, my friend, you do not walk alone," in the way that we practice hospitality. Throughout one's stay she is held up and cared for -- a clean, inviting room, a warm, delicious meal, even prayers offered in the chapel -- all ways we walk with her.

We create a place where people create community by working, eating, worshiping, singing and laughing together. In that community one's spirit is sung to and called into a connection with others.

The Ranch is a home for the spirit, and the song that sings it home comes in many forms. There is the literal music that can be heard throughout the year from groups like Women Making Music or the Grace Cathedral Boys Choir. There are sacred songs of Hildegard and silly songs around the campfire.

There is other music that sings to our spirits. A dawn chorus of birds, or the twilight symphony of crickets sing robust songs, while rustling of the wind in the grasses or the stillness in the chapel sing quiet, contemplative songs.

There is a flock of about 25 turkeys, old and young, that roost at night in the California bay laurel trees below Kip Cottage where I live. In the mornings I can hear the older turkeys call out as they come down and gather in the meadow. The old birds call and the young birds respond. I can almost hear the words.

"Courage . . . you do not walk alone."

I hope you can make it to the Ranch soon, and when you do that you will listen for the song which sings your spirit home.

**Introduction** *Continued from page 1*

York City, and a younger sister who works for Amazon in London. In my spare time I am a big fan of dancing, cardio kickboxing, weightlifting, meditation, and healthy home cooking.

I am looking forward to serving the chapel and retreat communities here, while continuing to develop my various holistic wellness ministries. I cannot wait to get to know each of you as you come and visit the Ranch. In the meantime, please reach out with any questions or notes. I would love to connect with you.

**READ On...** *Continued from page 3*

And, that love is returned whole heartedly. At camp we are constantly sharing our stories with each other in sometimes challenging and always significant ways.

One student said to me recently that she wished READ Camp never had to end. Perhaps it never will because experiences continue in the telling and retelling of stories. Perhaps she will write a book one day. One we will all read, not to win a contest or get a prize but to hear a good story about a beautiful experience.

Read on...

***READ Camp is a program of The Bishop's Ranch, in partnership with the Healdsburg Unified School District and Corazón Healdsburg. The program is offered at no cost to the participants thanks to a generous grant from the Josephine S. Leiser Foundation and contributions to our Partnership Fund made by many donors.***

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## Upcoming Ranch Programs

Fall Hike

*October 19, 2019*

Spirit Guides and Guardian Angels

*November 2-3, 2019*

A Day of Yoga with Marie Hirsch

*November 9, 2019*

Song and Silence:

Sing the Sacred Chant of

Hildegard von Bingen

*November 22-24, 2019*

Sweet Chariot: The Gift and Wisdom  
of Black Spiritual Music

*December 7th, 2019*

Quiet Days in Advent

*December 7-13, 2019*

Wisdom of the Heart

*December 13-15, 2019*

Epiphany Reflection Day

*January 4, 2020*

California School of Celtic Consciousness

*February 18-20, 2020*

Please visit the program page on our website  
for more information or to register:

[www.bishopsranch.org](http://www.bishopsranch.org)



## Annual Fund Update

**\$204,000 raised to date**

The Annual Fund impacts all aspects of life at the Ranch. Donate today to help us exceed our \$300,000 goal.

**\$40,000 challenge grant**

We have secured \$31,000 of the grant so far. New and increased donations will be matched dollar for dollar. Donate today to help us meet the November 30 deadline.

**287 Households**

We are grateful to the 287 households that have given to the Annual Fund so far. Donate today and be part of the community that supports the mission of the Ranch.

## Help Keep Us On The Move

Sarah Hart, a quilter who comes to the Ranch Quilt Retreat, saw from our wish list that we needed a new mobility scooter. She called to find out the price range and now thanks to her donation we have a shiny new red scooter!

We are still looking to upgrade our transportation fleet. If you have a vehicle that is in good condition that you are ready to part with, please think of us. A mini van would be especially useful, but a passenger car or truck would be great, too. Email Jack Dowling at [jack@bishopsranch.org](mailto:jack@bishopsranch.org) to let him know.

Check out the rest of our wish list on our website with links to items the Ranch staff has chosen to best serve their departments:

<https://www.bishopsranch.org/support/wishlist>





## Remembering Reverend James Thompson Brown



The Reverend James Thompson Brown passed away peacefully just after dawn on July 31, 2019 at 92 years of age. Jim was the Chaplain of the Chapel of St. George at the Ranch for 22 years, from 1989 to 2011. During that time a congregation of local people, Ed and Nancy Markell being among the first, were drawn to come to the chapel on Sundays by Jim's unique and personal ministry. This worship community continues today.

Jim had a long career in the church, including as rector of St. John the Evangelist in San Francisco. He also had a long history at the Ranch, helping to lead contemplative retreats. A truly kind and welcoming man, Jim had an inner light that was inspirational to many. People responded immediately to his remarkable personal warmth and were put at ease by his down-to-earth authenticity. It was a delight to experience his laughter and stories and characteristic amusement and wonder at the miracle of life. He is greatly missed. A memorial service was held at the Ranch on September 7th. An obituary can be found using this link:

<http://adobecreekfuneralhome.com/obituaries-2/james-thompson-brown/1144/>

## Legacy Circle News



*Joe Fazackerly at Generations Camp 2019*

Joseph Fazackerley, age 25, became our youngest Legacy Circle member when he made the Ranch a beneficiary of his 401k retirement plan. Joe has been coming to camp since he was a young boy and last year joined our Acorn Society. When he decided he wanted to be part of the Legacy Circle, he found out one of the easiest ways to make a planned gift is with a designation in a retirement plan.

Following the passing some time ago of dear Ranch friends and supporters, we were recently notified of two legacy gifts. The first was from Thomas and Margaret Bowman, who indicated a specific amount in their trust be directed to the Ranch. The second was from Kay E. Bishop. Her gift to the Ranch was a percentage of her estate.

Tom and Margie Bowman were members of St. John's, Oakland, and helped organize several of the parish retreats. Margie and Tom

were members of the diocesan Environmental Commission, and they both loved the wildlands of the Ranch, and helped develop the first guide to the Ranch trails.

Kay was a member of St. Luke's in San Francisco, and a member of the Ranch board of directors from 1991 to 2012. She was very active in the diocese and helped the Ranch connect to other organizations. Kay is a founding member of the Legacy Circle and was on the board when it established our endowment, the El Rancho del Obispo Fund.

As we joyfully celebrate these supportive members of the Ranch community, we are grateful for their thought and care for the Ranch's future. If you would like to know more about setting up a contribution to the Ranch in your estate plan, please contact Jack Dowling at 707-433-2440 x105 or email [jack@bishopsranch.org](mailto:jack@bishopsranch.org).



*Left: Tom & Margie Bowman with Sean Swift. Right: Kay Bishop with Bishop Swing*



## The Bishop's Ranch

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# Cheesy Zucchini & Red Onion Flatbread

Recipes from The Bishop's Ranch Kitchen

*Camp staff loved this flatbread as part of their last meal of camp season. We like to roast & season our onions first and make a homemade herb cheese spread. Recipe adapted from Epicurious.*

- Nonstick vegetable spray
- 1 10 oz. tube of refrigerated pizza dough
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup garlic and cheese spread (such as Alouette), divided in half
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup finely grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley, divided
- 1 small red onion sliced in  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch rounds, divided
- 1 7- to 8-inch-long zucchini, cut into  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick rounds, divided
- Olive oil

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; spray with nonstick spray. Form dough into a long rectangle on the parchment paper. Spread half of the

herb cheese over half the dough, leaving a half inch plain border. Sprinkle with half of Parmesan and 2 tablespoons parsley. Using parchment as aid, fold plain half of the dough over the filled half (do not seal edges). Spread the remaining herb cheese over top and sprinkle with remaining Parmesan.

Arrange one row of zucchini down the long edge of the dough. Arrange onion rings down the middle of the dough. Arrange one more row of zucchini along the other edge. Brush vegetables with olive oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Bake until puffed and brown at the edges, about 24 minutes. Garnish with remaining tablespoon of parsley.