

Spring 2011 Newsletter



Sky Ranch's Mission is to Facilitate an Encounter with Christ on the Mountaintops

- To unfold the gifts of all participants
- To challenge beyond the comfortable
- To gift our community with diversity
- To be fertile soil for the seeds of faith
- To embrace changing needs
- To preserve our environments
- To build up positive leadership
- To celebrate with inspiration and joy

Board of Directors

- Angie McDonald, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Fort Collins
- Rob Behrens - Fort Collins
- Dan Bollman--Rocky Mountain Synod Representative, Denver
- Kevin Dragseth - Bethany Lutheran Church, Cherry Hills Village
- Gene Elder - Zion Lutheran Church, Loveland
- Kim Haguestuen - Spirit of Joy, Fort Collins
- Jeff Kelty - Glory of God Lutheran Church, Wheat Ridge
- Meghan Aelabouni - Trinity Lutheran Church, Fort Collins
- Mark Peterson - Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Longmont
- RC Reiman - Ascension Lutheran Church, Cheyenne
- Scott Singdahlsen - Joy Lutheran Church, Parker
- Roberta Wentworth - Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lakewood
- Mike Williams - Christ Lutheran Church, Highlands Ranch

SKY RANCH LUTHERAN CAMP

FENCE POST

2011 SUMMER REGISTRATION

As we prepare for the 2011 camping season, we are getting ready to welcome more campers and guests to Sky Ranch than any time in the last four years!

Current registrations are up 30% compared to final onsite participation in 2010. Programs with large camper increases include Round Up! (1 - 3 grade), Confirmation Intensive 6 - 8), and Rendezvous (9 - 12). We also have nearly twice as many high school youth in backpacking or service trips. While registration is up, there are still spots available most weeks; it isn't too late to sign up for camp this summer.



Sky Ranch does not fulfill its mission unless kids, youth and adults are at camp, encountering Christ and nurturing faith. We are excited to continue to partner with individuals, families and congregations to increase the number of campers and enrich the life of this great ministry.

JULY 4TH FAMILY CAMP

With six action packed days and all meals, lodging, great summer staff, and Christ-centered activities provided, this is the supreme family getaway! After morning worship, adults can attend sessions with our guest speaker, while youth enjoy activities with our well-trained counselors. Afternoons are open for families to spend time together participating in camp activities such as hiking, biking, arts & crafts, panning

for gold, archery, or exploring off-site trails. Each night draws to a close with worship around the campfire.

Family Camp is a great option for families with kids that are too young for summer camp or alumni who want to get back to the camp they love so much! For more information about family camp, please go to the Sky Ranch website.

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

Are you a Thrivent Financial member? You may be able to designate up to **\$2,500** each year to Sky Ranch through their new Choice Dollars program. This year we have received over \$10,000 from individuals who have allocated some or all of their Choice Dollars to Sky Ranch. How do you direct your Choice Dollars to Sky Ranch?

It's easy... Call 1-800-thrivent (1-800-847-4836) and state "Thrivent Choice," or visit "www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice" click, "get started" then choose to give your "Choice Dollars" to "Lutheran Ranches of the Rockies". If you have any questions about the process call our office at 970-493-5258. Be sure to thank a Thrivent rep!

BRAD ABBOTT - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the new Executive Director at Sky Ranch, I'm excited to be part of a ministry that has shaped the faith lives of tens of thousands of youth over the past 48 years. Sky Ranch also has a rich tradition of training staff to be church leaders regardless of their vocation and has provided the formative faith experience for numerous pastors and youth directors across the country.

The ministry experience at Sky Ranch bears witness to the word of God in powerful and relevant ways. By keeping true to the biblical foundations of our faith and our Mission statement, "To Facilitate an Encounter of Christ on the Mountaintops," we provide people of all ages relational and interactive faith experiences. It's a place where we as Christians are challenged to leave behind our self-interest so that we can share God's love as we live and serve each other in our daily lives.

I believe in the importance of outdoor ministry, but more importantly I believe in the ministry of Sky Ranch and it's future. I believe that by getting back to the basics of who (and whose) we are, we can reclaim the significance of Sky Ranch in the lives of individuals and congregations.

I am excited to work with the staff, the Board of Directors, congregations and you as we implement practical changes in our ministry that helps us focus on relationships. These relationships—more than scenery, facilities or programming—are what people are looking for.

At camp this means investing more time training summer staff with a focus on safety, hospitality, small group ministry, and worship.

Beyond camp it means creating a sense of partnership with individuals and congregations to insure the financial future of this ministry, understanding that we are all vital to the success of this ministry. We rely on the generous prayers, volunteer time and financial support of people like you who value our accomplishments, commitments and mission.

Please look to the "Ways You Can Help?" page in this newsletter for ways you can become involved in the ministry of Sky Ranch. We need your help and partnership to make this ministry flourish for another 50 years. I look forward to serving with you in this ministry for many of those years. Shalom.



Digital Photography Weekend

Sept 23 - 25 • \$150

A wonderful weekend full of community, instruction, and wandering the Sky Ranch property capturing the perfect images!

Guest Instructor: Karin Johnson
(www.kjphoto.org)



IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER REINSTATED FOR 2011

The IRA Charitable Rollover was first enacted on August 17, 2006, as part of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and has been reinstated for 2011. Taxpayers age 70½ and older are required to make annual distributions from their IRA's which are then included in the taxpayer's adjusted gross income (AGI) and subject to taxes. The IRA Charitable Rollover permits those taxpayers to make donations directly to charitable organizations from their IRAs without counting them as part of their AGI and, consequently, without paying taxes on them. A donor's total combined charitable IRA rollover contributions cannot exceed \$100,000 in any one year.

- Charitable contributions from an IRA must go directly to a public charity.
- Distributions can only be made from traditional Individual Retirement Accounts or Roth IRAs. Charitable donations from 403(b) plans, 401(k) plans, pension plans, and other retirement plans are not eligible for tax-free treatment.
- Distributions must be made directly from the IRA trustee payable to Sky Ranch.
- Donors cannot receive any goods or services in return for charitable IRA rollover contributions in order to qualify for tax-free treatment.
- In order to benefit from the tax-free treatment, donors must obtain written notice of each IRA rollover contribution from each charity.

ANDY SPRAIN - ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

We are preparing for a tremendous summer of ministry, where faith is nurtured and the Spirit of God is present in everything. With only a few weeks before campers and guest beginning to arrive, here's a quick look at the summer by the numbers:

40 Young Adults - Individuals from around the country that will form the 2011 Sky Ranch summer staff community. This includes 14 returning staff, 12 college graduates, and 19 individuals that grew up in the Rocky Mountain Synod.

16 Days - The total length of staff training, running from May 25 - June 10. During this time, our staff will build community, learn camp songs, explore the Bible Study and Lutheran theology, practice hospitality, play meadow games, go on day hikes, and join together in worship, prayer, and praise. By the end, they will be confident as they welcome youth and adult guests into the joys of camp.

20 Guest Presenters - Friends of camp who are coming to staff training to help prepare our staff for the coming summer. Our presenters include Pastor Leta Behrens (Bible Study & Day Camp); Pastor Dan Bollman (Lutheran Theology & Synodical History); Pastor Sarah Moening (Faith

Development and Spiritual Gifts); Brit Windel (Biblical Literacy); Gary Knutson (Youth Ministry perspective); Paul & Deborah Price (Environmental Education and Astronomy); John Batchelder (Ropes Instruction), among many others.

35 Staff Members - Individuals that will be certified in Wilderness First Aid, with training from Karen Whitwood of the American Red Cross. This training will help prepare our staff for the realities of wilderness programming. In addition to the WFA training, 5 members of our staff also have current EMT certifications.

17,945 Meals - The total number of meals that will be served throughout the summer. We will continue to offer family style meals, as we celebrate community at Sky Ranch. Of all the meals, almost 2,750 will be cooked over either fires or backpacking stoves.

\$11,500 - The amount that Sky Ranch will give out as scholarships to those who cannot afford to pay the entire camp fee. The scholarships ensure that everyone who wants to come to camp is able to do so. Additionally, we are once again working with Lutheran Family Services to invite youth and adults in their foster care program for a week of camp.

LEAVE A TRACE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Leave A Trace program was introduced in 2010 with the goal of partnering with local groups and congregations to make an investment in the property of Sky Ranch and to "Leave their Mark." It was a huge success, with noticeable differences all around camp.

- New pack out area in backpack center allowed for offsite food service to be separated from general kitchen operations (Trinity, Fort Collins, CO)
- Youth cabins received a lot of attention, including new doors, new lights, new storage furniture, and new window treatments. Additionally, several of the cabins were permanently adopted by local congregations (Spirit of Joy, Fort Collins, CO; Glory of God, Wheat Ridge, CO; Lord of the Valley, Grandby, CO)
- Stringfellow received a major face lift, including new entry deck, new interior walls, new roof, and new exterior drainage (Christ, Highlands Ranch, CO)

- Hutchinson cabin received a new front deck made from Trex composite, sure to last for years to come (Trinity, Loveland, CO)

Thank you to everyone who worked with the Leave A Trace program. You all made a huge impact! There are many projects still available. Contact our office if you are interested in helping with a project.



2011 SKY RANCH SUMMER STAFF



Erika Beahm
Grad, U of Saskatchewan



Emily Bishop
Pacific Lutheran University



Katie Bode
Grad, California Lutheran



Bethany Brooks
Colorado College



Sierra Freeman
U of Northern Colorado



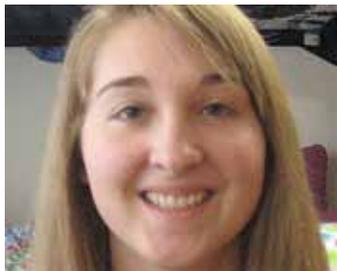
Peter Gonia
California Lutheran



Joe Jedrzejewski
Bethany College



Sarah Johnson
Grad, Valparasio University



Sarah Loberg
Luther College



Kaitlyn Lundebly
U of Northern Colorado



Jessica McCallum
Grad, Valparasio University



Evan Menkes
Missouri, Science and Tech



Allisun Palma-Ruwe
Grad, California Lutheran



Brandi Patrick
Bethany College



Makenzie Patrick
Midland University



Mary Patterson
Gustavus Adolphus College



Matthew Schulz
Grad, Valparasio University



Kathryn Seyfrth
Grad, Augustana College



Rebecca Simonds
U of Northern Colorado



Andrew Steger
U of Colorado

These young adults are gathering together as the 2011 Sky Ranch Summer Staff. Their experiences will be full of lots of laughter, new friendships, overcoming challenges, and meaningful ministry moments too numerous to count. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers, as well as the many guests traveling to camp this summer!



Mark Brooks
Grad, U of Colorado



Jenn Collins
Wartburg Seminary



Matt Dalthrop
Luther College



Katherine Donner
U of Northern Colorado



Adam Knauff
Grad, Concordia Moorhead



Jordan Lange
U of Illinois



Paul Larson
Sacramento City College



Jaime Lemens
U of Illinois



Ben Moening-Swanson
Aims Community College



Ava Nanney
Colorado State



Joe Natwick
Grad, Pacific Lutheran



Kelsey Nulph
Wartburg College



Ally Plucheck
Aims Community College



Alissa Reed
Oklahoma City University



Joe Rein
Colorado State University



Megan Sawyer
Kansas State University



Chris Stuberg
Grad, Concordia Moorhead



Whitney Stuberg
Colorado State University



Emily Vander Stel
Luther College



Kevin Winn
Colorado State University

HOW YOU CAN HELP . . .

We welcome your participation in a number of ways to support our camp's programs, facilities and staff. We need your help to make the ministry of Sky Ranch flourish! Here are six ways YOU can help Sky Ranch . . .

**Prayer • Participate in Programs/Retreats • In-Kind Donation • Planned Gifts
Financial Gifts • Volunteer/ Leave – Trace**

PRAYER

Keep Sky Ranch in your prayers. Pray that God will continue to provide for and bless this ministry. Pray for the 2011 Summer staff (page 4 & 5) as they minister to the youth this summer. Pray for the campers that will attend Sky Ranch this summer; that they might have a safe and faith-building experience.

PARTICIPATE

There is something at Sky Ranch for all ages! Invite your friends and neighbors to come to camp with you for a summer program or non-summer retreat. We have programs for families, individuals and congregations! **Memorial Day Work Weekend is a special no-cost camp** for families and individuals (see back cover).

IN-KIND DONATION

Sky Ranch accepts in-kind donations from individuals, organizations and congregations. Gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law based on a value assigned by the giver. Check out our Wish list on the Sky Ranch website to see if you have anything you don't need but Sky Ranch does.

PLANNED GIFTS - LEAVE A FOREVER LEGACY

Sky Ranch's legacy is one of changed lives. We live in a world that desperately needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. This word creates hope, new beginnings and forgiveness in our lives. Join us in this mission as we **'change lives . . . one camper at a time'**.

Are you WILL-ing? As a Christian, you have rejoiced in your talents by being a lifelong steward. The distribution of your estate is the last witness of your faith. You can continue your stewardship by providing for the work of the church long after your life ends. **Your will and various life income agreements are just a few ways that you could include Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in your estate planning.**

Many definitions of planned giving exist, but essentially these are gifts that come through a donor's estate or utilize financial professionals in setting them up. **In many cases, significant tax, estate tax and other benefits are discovered by the donor in making a planned gift.** In all cases, knowing that the ministry of Sky Ranch will be strengthened for the future is a blessing to the donor and to this ministry. Here are a few simple ways to leave a legacy gift for the future of Sky Ranch:

Bequest - A bequest is made through a will and is made by naming Sky Ranch as a beneficiary of either a fixed amount or a percentage of an estate. Some friends of Sky Ranch consider tithing their estate to charity and include Sky

Ranch, while others adopt Sky Ranch as an additional child, splitting their estate between the children and charity.

Life Insurance - The easiest method of making a gift of life insurance is simply to make Sky Ranch either full or partial beneficiary of an existing life insurance policy. It is also possible to transfer ownership of a policy to Sky Ranch. You can also buy a life insurance policy, donate it to Sky Ranch and then pay the premium through Sky Ranch each year as a donation. This provides a possibility for a deduction each year for the premium payment as well as a final payment to Sky Ranch upon death.

Charitable Gift Annuity - A charitable Gift Annuity is a legal contract between you and Sky Ranch that guarantees the donor a fixed income for life. The rate of return is based upon the donor's age or the age of both spouses. There can be an immediate tax deduction for part of the gift and some of the income may be tax free to the donor.

IRA - Naming Sky Ranch as full or partial beneficiary of an IRA is the simplest means to gift from an IRA.

Please consult your tax or financial advisor to determine what type of gift is best for you, and to learn if you are eligible for any tax savings or other advantages. To learn more, contact Brad Abbott at the Sky Ranch office (970-493-5258).

THE MINISTRY OF SKY RANCH

FINANCIAL GIFTS

WHY GIVE?

Fees charged to youth and adults for summer camping and year round retreating do not cover all of the costs. Traditionally, program fees cover 65% of total camp operating expenses. Sky Ranch intentionally keeps the fees low to accommodate all campers who wish to participate, regardless of economic circumstances. The remaining money for operating costs must be raised by Sky Ranch each year. When you give to Sky Ranch your gift supports a Christ centered camp experience that changes lives. Your gift of any amount to Sky Ranch accomplishes the following:

Gives Opportunity: It has always been our policy that no one be denied the opportunity to come to camp because of their financial situation. Your gift helps support a campership program that provides camperships to youth.

Gives Experience: Sky Ranch changes lives! Your gift allows campers to “Encounter Christ on the mountaintops.” Living in Christian community, surrounded by God’s creation provides a unique experience for campers of all ages.

Gives Education: Your gift supports high quality programs, facilities and staff that provide interactive experiences for campers to learn about God’s great love for them.

Gives Hope: The foundation of our faith is Hope in Jesus. Your gift helps to provide campers a safe place to experience that Hope! Camp is transforming lives and nurturing faith-filled leaders for tomorrow. This Hope in Jesus is to be shared!



WAYS TO MAKE A FINANCIAL GIFT

Annual Giving makes all the difference at Sky Ranch. These gifts enable us to offer outstanding programs, maintain the operations, provide camperships, and update our facilities. **These ‘living gifts’ are essential to the daily life of the ministry.** Please consider a gift to Sky Ranch. Go to www.SkyRanchColorado.org to make a secure online gift. When donating by credit card, 97% of your donation will go to Sky Ranch. If you want 100% of your donation go to Sky Ranch, mail your check directly to us in the enclosed envelope.

Gift cards are a way for you to know exactly where your gift will be spent. Gift cards are used to purchase food, gas, craft supplies, office supplies or maintenance materials.

Gifts of stock, mutual funds, or other securities are a great way to give more to Sky Ranch than you originally invested, plus you can take a deduction for the current market value on the date of the gift. In order to preserve tax advantages, it is critical that you transfer the securities to Sky Ranch rather than the proceeds from a sale.

Gifts from an IRA are a way for donors aged 70½ or older are eligible to move up to \$100,000 from their IRAs directly to Sky Ranch without having to pay income taxes on the money (see IRA Rollover, page 2).

Memorial gifts are a wonderful way to remember and honor a loved one.

Thrivent Choice dollars are an easy way to support Sky Ranch (See Thrivent Choice Dollars, page 1).

VOLUNTEER

Sky Ranch needs the time and talents of many volunteers in order to keep operating to its full potential. Sky Ranch has limited full time staff; the rest of the ministry is completed by dedicated summer staff, part time help and many, many volunteers. **Leave A Trace** is a congregational based volunteer opportunity to bring a group to camp and complete a project together (see Leave A Trace, page 3). Skilled and unskilled groups are welcome, and funding is often available through Thrivent.

MEMORIAL DAY WORK WEEKEND

MAY 27 - 30 2011

This is a cost-free weekend to help prepare Sky Ranch for a busy summer. Call our office to register - 970.493.5258.



Stay up to date with what's going on at camp by reading the Ranch Blog. Go to our website, the News menu, and Sky Ranch Blog.

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