



JUNE 2021

Christian Encounter Ranch NEWSLETTER

GOD'S RESTORATIVE WORK CONTINUES 1970-2021



50th anniversary celebration: Sept. 24-26, 2021

As restrictions lift and gatherings are being permitted in smaller groups, we are anticipating seeing Ranch family, friends, and supporters through the decades all together in September.

Come for the whole weekend or drop in for part of the festivities! There is no charge for the event.

You won't want to miss:

- Ranch family Ultimate Frisbee game
- Ranch family Jeopardy game
- Gameshow night
- Untalent Night
- Church in the Meadow
- Big barbeque in the Meadow

Registration is open online.

A PIECE OF RANCH HISTORY

How our 12 cabins came to be

In the early 1980's, John Yates was eating lunch with Jim Parker at Angels' Meadow and sketched out on a napkin his idea of having camping cabins.

Blessing #1: The vision is made known and a family in Oregon responds wanting to donate all the lumber for the project.

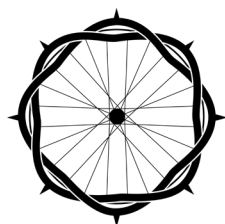
Blessing #2: A man in Yuba City volunteers to use his big truck to transport the lumber.

Blessing #3: At the weigh-station, the attendant said they needed to reload the lumber to continue. The

inspector caught wind of the project, took pity on them and connected them with a friend nearby who had a forklift.

Blessing #4: The owner of a local lumber yard hears about the donation and offers to bring a forklift out to help unload the lumber.

Blessing #5: Senior-citizen volunteers build the cabins in three weeks' time.
(cont. on back page)



AGONY RIDE

JULY 23-24, 2021

How will the event look different this year?

With restrictions evolving, we will comply with the county guidelines in effect at the time of the event.

How much money did last year's Ride bring in?

\$250,000+. We shattered the previous record by over \$25K.

Will you continue to offer a virtual option?

Yes. We want to give those who cannot make arrangements to be in the Valley the opportunity to ride. We also recognize the value of the witness of people riding in their own communities.

Sign up or sponsor a rider at agonyride.org.

“There is Hope, and He’s a person.”

By Gracie Schauls, former intern



In April I finished an internship of several months that changed my life forever. I came here not knowing why God called me, wondering how I could even make an impact. I had plans for the future that didn't involve this. Why am I here?

I still don't have all the answers, but often all that God asks of us is to show up and He will help take care of the rest. There is no greater freedom than answering the call to something even if we can't see what's behind it.

Here, I walked alongside students with tremendous trauma, who were left behind or abandoned emotionally or physically. They have unique stories all their own. I'm sure you can relate with these students even if you don't realize it.

I didn't know I would also find myself walking through deep internal wounds I had avoided for so long. As I was challenged here, my intimacy with God grew, and through a painful process, the wounds I hid behind closed doors came into the light

where I didn't have to feel the weight of them anymore.

God does not abandon those who are His, and He works all things for the good of those who love Him. In each one of these students' lives I've witnessed new growth and change, because the love of God is greater than any sorrow, trauma, fear or sin. Anything that brings death and pain to your body God will use to bring forth life. Only He can make you new. Here, I was reminded there is Hope, and He's a person.

A decade later: “The Ranch was a huge stepping stone on my path...”

By Andrew Nutt, student '08-'10



When I arrived at the Ranch as a student in 2008, I was a troubled young man, battling demons of addiction and insecurity. I reluctantly agreed to attend a residential “treatment” program after a sort of rock bottom, including legal repercussions for my substance abuse issues. I can clearly remember feeling super annoyed my first evening at the Ranch. Everybody was so friendly, happy, and genuinely interested in who I was, and for some reason it rubbed me the wrong way. In hindsight I can't help but wonder if my irritability was caused by the evil and darkness in my heart at conflict with the love and light in my new environment.

During my tenure at Christian Encounter I experienced many struggles. I struggled to feel comfortable in my own skin as my mind cleared from years of pollutants. I struggled wrestling with my identity and learning who I really was. I struggled with identifying toxic influences in my personal life, establishing healthy boundaries, and letting people go. These were very real, painful experiences that were extremely challenging to navigate. It was a sincere battle with myself.

I can't honestly say that my personal battles were over after leaving the Ranch, or that it was some sort of long-term saving grace. I still had much growing to do, as I will for the rest of my time on this earth. But my stay at the Ranch was a huge stepping stone on my path of learning to love others and myself, and letting the good Lord love me.

Now, many years down the road, I am a blessed man with a loving wife and two young children. My family and I live in the small mountain town of Pollock Pines, CA, where I grew up. I have a fulfilling career as a firefighter with the US Forest Service, and love what I do very much. I have continued to grow and learn, and have become a student of personal development. My wife and I make every effort to provide for our children the same environment that I had at the Ranch; one full of love, honesty, and the security that comes with living your life putting Jesus first.

I will always be grateful for my time at the Ranch and will forever remember the many evenings spent at the dock fishing, contemplating life, and enjoying God's company.



Andrew at the Ranch in 2009.



FORMER STUDENTS



Steve Neal ('95-'96) lives in Colorado Springs, CO with his wife, Jamie. After they began fostering in 2015, they adopted Jose, 14, and Fern, 18. Steve has worked in investment operations for the past eight years but is looking to move into full-time ministry. He is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree through Gateway University.



Alexa Gates ('11-'12) studied fashion at Santa Monica College and launched her own handmade candle business, Piaceri, in March. She resides in Los Angeles, CA.



Summer (Hoff) Barry ('86-'87) and her husband Brad reside in St. George, UT and have two daughters, Mckenzie and Kate, who graduated from Delaware State University last month. Summer completed a B.S. in English in 2013 and did a brief stint in teaching before heading back to school to earn

her architectural drafting certificate in 2017. She has since started Summer Barry Design, providing architectural and interior design. Summer created one of the top three (of 30) parade homes in the 2019 Saint George Parade of Homes.

Ember Caulfield ('10-'11) lives in North Port, FL and is working as a medical assistant at a dermatology center.

Deena (Moench) Vargas ('87-'88) lives in Oroville, CA, where she is active in Father's House Ministry, a church busily meeting the practical needs of many in the community. She and husband Cory have been married 27 years; they have four children and a nine year-old granddaughter. Deena is a licensed optician and a manager at Costco.

FORMER INTERNS



Following his internship, **Jonathan Mangano ('13)** attended Indiana Wesleyan University where he completed his Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. He has been working as a men's domestic violence counselor since 2016 at Families First, a local non-profit agency, and more recently also began working in trauma counseling. Jonathan married his wife Kait in November 2014, and they just adopted a baby girl, Aila. They reside in Indianapolis, IN.



Melissa (Koch) Summers ('00) and her husband Phillip met on the mission field in Ecuador and Peru and were married in 2005 with three former interns in the bridal party. They now have three children and live in Winston Salem, NC where they do ministry work in a primarily Latino-American

neighborhood. Melissa works as a teachers' assistant for first graders.



Emily (Hammer) Louisos ('16) completed her Master of Social Work degree at the University at Buffalo, NY in 2018 and married her husband Elliot a month later. They welcomed their first child, Annabelle, to the world last June and live in Alexandria, VA. Emily received her licensure in January and

works part-time at a private counseling practice.

David ('95-'97) and Daphne (Vaughn) Huffman ('95-'97) are in Portland, OR with their two children, Naomi and Eben. David continues in his career as an early intervention occupational therapist and Daphne works part-time



at George Fox University as a social work professor. Naomi graduated 8th grade and enjoys drama and volleyball. Eben finished 6th grade and spends his time with the Boy Scouts and honing his archery skills.

FAMILY CAMP

We have the weekend planned.
You bring the fam.

\$60/cabin
June 25-28

To avoid congregating in the Lodge, we will be serving all meals outdoors in the Meadow. More info online.

Alumni, we'd love to hear from you! Let us know where you are and what you're up to.
alumni@christianencounter.org

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Christian Encounter Ranch is a non-profit, non-denominational, residential community helping 15- to 24-year-olds by providing love, spiritual guidance, high school education, counseling, and 24-hour supervision. Internships are offered to young adults 21 years and older. We are a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and all gifts are tax deductible.



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MEMORIALS

In memory of William E. Boyd, given by:

Greg & Diane Boyd
Members of Calvary Chapel Merced
Jim & Judi Petersen
Tom & Nancy Porter
Derek & Rebecca Wilson
Donald & Carol Delisle

In memory of Jerry Clayton, given by:
Roy & Debbie Clayton

In memory of Bill Gladney, given by:
Tim & Shirley Salter

In memory of Peter Mosgofian, given by:
Jaime Donovan

In memory of Ken Simon, given by:
Judi Simon

Cabins *(cont. from pg. 1)*

Blessing #6: The cabins still need windows, roofs, doors, beds, and carpets. A man calls and wants to donate \$12,500 in memory of his wife for the project. (This couple knew of a family whose son's life was turned around at the Ranch.) The money covers everything except the windows.

Blessing #7: At the final stage in the project, we learn the windows needed are not a standard size and thus need to be custom made - a considerable expense. Jim attends a prayer breakfast in town where he is connected with a board member at a local Christian camp. He is invited to look at the spare windows they have available at which Jim politely declined because of the size needed. At this man's insistence, "Now, Jim..., you never know what the Lord can do...", Jim went, and there they were - our exact need - twelve 2'x10' windows!

Our 12 cabins are still in use today. Along with an amphitheater, outdoor kitchen, and campfire pit, our Meadow venue is available for retreats and church gatherings free of charge.