



# The Ranch Rambler

Fall 2023

## FROM YOUR CAMP DIRECTOR, KEVIN OWEN

*"As the deer panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."* Psalm 42:1

We have probably all heard or read this verse and maybe even sung the song "As the Deer Pants". This psalm is powerful in the fact that we should always seek and long after our God. As in this chapter, the Psalmist (presumably David) longed to worship God in the tabernacle, no matter if in exile or in good times. The one true God that has always been and forever will be our King.

This psalm speaks of the deer. The whitetail deer has always been one of my favorite North American animals. There are many different species of deer and as you know, Idaho has the whitetail and mule deer. Twice I came across a little fawn that seemed to be all alone. In reality, the "mama" doe had communicated the approaching danger and instructed the fawn to lay motionless and wait till the pending danger is over. I knew what was happening and realized it was best to just observe.

It is amazing how God designed the fawn to be so camouflaged and scentless that it stands a chance of survival in spite of its predators. The doe and fawn relation is strong. The doe has an instilled, keen sense to direct, care, and protect her fawn. The fawn has to listen to the doe's mews and grunts to know when its time to eat and move, and when danger is near. This process is crucial for the fawn's survival.

Much like our Christian life and walk with God, this pictures how God loves, cares, and protects us. He has chosen us to thrive in our generation. This day and age has many distractions and present dangers that can lead a Christian down a path of discouragement and defeat. God wants us to listen to His voice and seek after His ways. Just as the psalmist states, he longs after God; we need to long after His ways and His truth. If we long after Him, he will provide us direction, protection, peace, and the list could go on and on.



Campers get that sense of renewal and direction each summer hearing God's Word taught here at OFCR. The whole atmosphere of camp has God's Word being the central force that brings safety, encouragement, challenge, and direction. We as camp staff and board members, along with everyone who receives this newsletter, pray that these campers will listen to God's calling each summer. Whether that is the calling of repentance to come to Him as Lord and Savior, or the calling to turn back to Him and serve the Lord with the life they have on this earth.

Just as the fawn grows in obedience of listening to the "mama" doe, we are challenging these campers to live a life of obedience unto God. Please continue to pray for the campers and retreat guests that come to OFCR, that they may be renewed to follow Christ no matter what the cost.

How about you as you read this newsletter? Are you listening to God's calling, His Word? Are you following His direction? Are you walking in His protection and peace? I pray that you are, and that God's blessings will be upon you and your family.

## FROM YOUR BOARD CHAIRMAN, DAVE RUTHARDT

I took this little guy's picture next to the camp directional signs as we were setting up for Big Sky Scholarship Camp. He was headed towards the new Conference Center, but he turned tail and ran across the volleyball court. I will never know why he changed his direction. Maybe he scented some of the wonderful food being cooked at the Lodge! More likely, he figured I was a threat and his flight response kicked in.

Sometimes a change of direction, or even an about-face is critical to our own safety or spiritual growth. As the psalmist wrote, "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." (Psalm 16:9) In Genesis, Joseph made the wise decision to run from Potiphar's wife, "But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran out-side." (Genesis 39:15)

Old Faithful Christian Ranch has faced difficult decisions over the years, and surely God will allow us to experience many more. That is the nature of the Christian walk. He doesn't offer us a trouble-free life. In fact, Jesus promised His followers just the opposite. This summer, our camp theme was God's Design Over Mine, using the text of Psalm 139:14, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made". Each camp speaker stressed that God doesn't make mistakes and that we can trust Him to lead us in the way we should go. Which way are you headed? Are you following Christ's directions or your own plans?



*"Trust ye in the Lord for ever:  
for in the Lord JEHOVAH is  
everlasting strength."  
Isaiah 26:4*

## Recap of Fall Retreats

Being from the south I do not really know when fall starts out here! It feels like summer is over in mid-August. So, this quick summary of retreat season will start in August. The month of August and September were packed. Officially Big Sky Scholarship Camp (AWANA camp) ends the summer season here at OFCR. Retreat season kicked off the very next weekend.

In August, OFCR served three church groups that were family, men's, and ladies retreats along with Watersprings School, Trail Life, and Alpha Omega Institute. When September arrived Alpha Omega Institute held their third trip (one being in the Spring) with us. The rest of September was super busy as local churches scheduled their retreats around the weekend of the Look Up Tour coming into Idaho Falls. The rest of the month, we served two churches, a group of missionaries, a local college group, a women's crafting weekend, and a school group from Washington, and a gap-year school that came twice (two different group of students) from Pennsylvania and West Virginia. To finish out the fall, we served a gap-year program from a church in Washington and hosted one men's retreat in the month of October.

It is amazing to think the sphere of impact in how God uses OFCR. Through these various groups, we have had people from the west to the east coast—from New York, Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and the list could go on and on. We could not have served all these great groups of people without our volunteers who graciously gave of their time and energy. Thanks to everyone who served with OFCR this year!



# FACILITIES UPDATE

In August, we hosted a group called Volunteer Mobile Missionaries (VMMers). This was the second year in a row they came, with different couples attending each year. This year, two couples came and we accomplished a lot in the three weeks they were here. Some of the work accomplished was: finished soffit and fascia at Conference Center Lodge, painted one of the transport buses, insulated the floor of the four heated cabins, projects at the main Lodge (including building a storage room). We are very thankful they came and appreciate all their hard work!



The good news is the exterior of the Conference Center Lodge is finished! The interior needs floor coverings, but in the meantime, it is ready for groups to use. Our next big project is the kitchen remodel.



## Kitchen Campaign Update

February 2023 kicked off OFCR's kitchen campaign. We challenged the 550+ individuals/churches that the Ranch Rambler goes out to give towards this project. The challenge was to get **202** supporters to give \$800 and then to reach out to **3** donors that could give a larger sum –thus the theme for the **2023** kitchen campaign.

**If you have not yet given this year toward the kitchen campaign, we pray God will lay on your heart to give no matter what the amount.**

Current statistics of how the fundraising is going: we have a total of \*\*\* donors out of our goal of 202 and 1 large donor. The total in donations are \$\$\$\$\$. We here at camp are grateful for all the donations and encourage the ones who have not given yet to prayerfully consider in giving before the year end.

### THANK YOU!!!

To all the OFCR donors,  
and prayer partners.

#### Thanks

- to all who donated \$ to the kitchen campaign
- to a donor who gave a log splitter
- to all who donated bikes
- to the donor who gave three canoes
- to the donor(s) who gave a vehicle

**Please continue to look for ways to give and support OFCR**

## Conklin Family's New Adventure

It is with grateful hearts here at OFCR we say thank you to the Conklin family for their service here at camp over the years. Due to health reasons on Kim's part, the Lord has moved them to Idaho Falls where they can be closer to medical facilities. Tim was our Facilities Director and Kim was our Director of Food Service and Hospitality. Please keep this servant-hearted family in your prayers as the Lord opens doors for serving Him in the area. The task and role of how they served as a family is much appreciated and will be missed at camp. Thanks again to the Conklin Family!



## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please pray for the 367 campers as they have returned home to difficult circumstances, struggles, and decisions. Pray that they would fervently seek first the Lord and find Him far superior than anything the world has to offer.
- Pray that the Lord would bring the key staff members that we are lacking to join in the work of the ministry at OFCR.
- Please pray for rest and refreshment after a busy, full summer and fall season at camp.

## PRAISES

- Praise God for the campers who made first time decisions to trust Christ as their Savior! And for those who have rededicated their lives to following Jesus!
- The 19 retreats this fall went beautifully, and it was a delight to be with the Body of Christ!
- We have staff members come from all over the country, as far away as Pennsylvania, and many of the staff served multiple weeks!

## Current Needs:

Camp is a big place, and it takes many hands to make it operate smoothly. We have some staffing needs for which we would appreciate your prayers and open eyes. If you have any questions or would like further details, please contact \_\_\_\_ or check out the \_\_\_\_ tab at ofcr.org.

- Bookkeeper (familiar with Quickbooks, payroll)
- Kitchen Director (food ordering, menu/food preparation, volunteer recruitment, running of the kitchen for summer camp and retreats)
- Facilities Director (maintenance, building experience, general mechanic skills, physically fit)
- Board Members???



## Workday!

There is something special about workdays. It isn't the fresh pine scent in the air, the tingling excitement of the approaching season change, or even the projects that get accomplished. No, the thing that is special about workdays is YOU. Though we gather together to punch out the To-Do list, it always ends up more like a family reunion where we see old friends, make new ones, and all share in the labor of love that is camp ministry. We were blown away when 40 people came for Fall Workday and blasted through the To-Do list in record time! Camp is in great shape going into the winter season, and we have YOU to thank for that! Whatever your involvement at camp, whether you have come and served on staff, donated financially to the ministry, lifted OFCR in prayer, or even come for just one workday, you have partaken in work of the Kingdom of God! Gospel seeds have been sown, watered, and harvested because of you, and we thank God for you in our prayers.

***Thank you, with all our hearts, thank you!***

### Ways to give!

- Donate online at [ofcr.org](https://ofcr.org) for one-time gifts or to set up monthly giving.
  - Or you can send a check to OFCR at 145 6Th Street, Idaho Falls, ID 83401
- OFCR is a 501(c)(3), and all donations are tax deductible**



## FROM YOUR PROGRAM DIRECTOR, BRENDA WOOD

*"Do I have to say a special prayer to ask Jesus into my heart?"* This question was asked by a middle school camper with tears streaming down his face, eyes full of desperation and hope. It is not often that I get to have these conversations with campers as they most often talk with their cabin leaders instead, and my heart leapt with joy at his earnest desire to know Jesus. After sharing the Gospel with him, he prayed the most sincere and open prayer I have heard, confessing his sins, asking Jesus to forgive him, and to come into his heart and life. What delight there was in heaven that night!



This summer, there were 25 campers who turned to Jesus Christ for salvation for the first time, and 255 who expressed that they had renewed their relationship with Jesus while at camp! We have never seen such a response from campers who are already walking with the Lord! Praise be to God! Please be in prayer for these 367 campers to be grounded in Jesus and growing in Him. With a wild rush, summer flew by! We had amazing staff who served the Lord wholeheartedly, loving on all the campers and sharing the joy of Jesus with them. There was such a wonderful responsiveness from the campers, who were eager to open their hearts to us and to hear of the assurance we have in the Lord. The theme, "God's design over mine," was timely and pointed all to look to God's Word to find our identity. Russ Blair spoke for Jr. Camp, and he would ask campers all week long, "Does God have a plan?" and they would shout, "GOD HAS A PLAN!" I was recently talking to a staff member from the summer who said that God was using that phrase to bring her through a difficult season of her life. What glorious seeds were planted this summer and have already begun to bear fruit! Praise be to God!

Now that weekend retreats have wrapped up, we turn our focus to preparing for winter, getting caught up on projects, reconnecting with supporters and staff, and taking a deep breath. Thank you all for your fervent prayers and steadfast supports all these 27 years. We love you!!!



### 2023 GOALS/NEEDS LIST

- Snowmobile (It is necessary to have two working snow mobiles)
- New propane BBQ grills (large and small)
- Build shelter at the firing range
- New lifejackets for tubing/canoeing
- Rolling cart for the folding tables
- Bumper pool table
- New vacuums 5

Don't forget to go to [www.ofcr.org](http://www.ofcr.org) for more info and pictures!

### Full-Time Staff

**Kevin Owen: Camp Director**

Phone: (208) 390-9840

Email: ofcddirector@gmail.com

**Brenda Wood: Program Director**

Phone: (208) 390-9845

Email: programdirector@ofcr.org

### Part-Time Staff

**Mollie Patterson: Office Manager**

Email: ofcroffice@gmail.com

**Pattie Owen: Interim Bookkeeper**

### OFCR Board of Directors

Dave Ruthardt  
(Chairman of the Board)

Pastor Russ Blair  
Pastor James Peterson

Daniel Isham  
Skyler Hatley

## Old Faithful Christian Ranch

- 367 Campers in 2023!
- 25 First time commitments to Jesus!
- 233 Rededications!
- 94 staff members! (64 serving one week, 30 serving multiple weeks. 31 who have been campers in the past)
- \_\_\_ OFCR scholarships!
- \_\_\_ campers riding the Idaho Falls bus!
- \_\_\_ campers riding the Driggs/Pinedale bus!



Continue to pray for the **KITCHEN  
REMODEL/UPDATE Funds**

**2024**

**May 3rd**

**June 1st**

**June 23rd-27th**

**July 1st-5th**

**July 8th-12th**

**July 15th-19th**

**July 22nd-26th**

**October 5th**

### **OFCR Calendar of Events!**

**APPRECIATION BANQUET**

**Spring Workday**

**Staff Training Week (for whole summer staff)**

**Sr. High (Grades 10th-graduated seniors)**

**Jr. High (Grades 8th-9th)**

**Middle School (Grades 6th-7th)**

**Jr. Camp (Grades 4th-5th)**

**Fall Workday**