

# THE RANCH REVIEW

## “Beauty for Ashes”

It is with mixed emotions that I report about the lightening fire that took place on the ranch



*The beauty of the ranch land remains intact, even after the fire.*

land on July 7th. Mike Brown, from Lumos & Associates, and I were visiting the site to evaluate the placement of the septic system. I was taken quite by surprise when turning a curve and noticing the flat sandy ground and the obvious disappearance of ground covering and brush – leaving the appearance of wide open spaces and pools of ash.

My first reaction was shock and disbelief followed closely by devastation and discouragement. My heart sank to my ankles, and I wondered – “How could God have allowed this to happen?” I continued to take in about 20 acres of burned trees and shrub.

However, a day or so later, the Lord began to comfort me; He revealed the good things behind the charred ruin:

- The burning cleared the area we are going to develop & created an area of defensive space.

- The 40,000 acres of surrounding BLM land is wonderfully and beautifully intact.
- The fire, clearing the land, created a sense of it’s time to begin building.
- And the spiritual connotation: The transformation of the land from ash to a beautiful development typifies the transformation which will occur in the lives of the young people we serve.
- Finally, the Lord showed me his heart for the kids as he brought to mind Isaiah 61:1-3, ... “ a crown of beauty for ashes.”

## Springs in the Desert: Oasis Unveiled

In May, we hired Bruce McKay to dig a well on the Ranch property. We hit water at 80 feet, revealing an actual oasis in the desert. We continued digging to a depth of 223 feet and an estimated 24 gallons per minute of water flow. It is more than enough to meet the Ranch water needs.



*Bruce McKay was hired to dig a well on Ranch property. We hit water at 80 feet, revealing an actual oasis in the desert.*



*I dedicate this article to two dear friends who passed on recently, both very very instrumental in my growth as a Christian and my eventual involvement in ministry.*

## President's Perspective

### *A Bright Light! In Memory of Cynthia Kelley*

Cynthia was a team leader in the Juvenile Outreach Ministry at Wittenberg Hall, our local juvenile detention center. One season in 1988, Cynthia asked me if I would go with



*Cynthia Kelley, vibrant, committed, and steadfast in her pursuit of achieving God's purposes for her life.*

her and share my testimony with the youth there. I told her I didn't think I had much to say, but she assured me that I had and that I should at least give it a try. So out of appreciation for all the encouragement and support I had received from her, I rather reluctantly told her, "Okay, I'll go."

The day finally came. I remember being scared and totally unsure of what I was suppose to be doing; I knew I was suppose to share my story, but I wasn't sure of what I was going to say. Before we

went in I told Cynthia about my concerns and she told me to just tell them about how I accepted Christ into my life, "let the Holy Spirit do the rest." Today, I don't remember exactly what I said, but I remember when we met outside to pray for the kids and talk about how it went, Cynthia and the rest of the team were very excited and told me that I did exceptionally well, that the young people were very attentive, had hung on to my every word, and that I had really connected with them. Cynthia invited me to join her team. She expressed her belief in me and the belief that working with youth would be God's plan for my life. It certainly was not clear to me – not then! I didn't answer right away, but eventually I did join her team.

Time has passed and circumstances evolved wherein I became a team leader, then the coordinator of the entire ministry (volunteer staff of 35) taking Church to these kids each Sunday, and now on Wednesdays (Bible study), and Fridays (individual mentoring).

Some years later, in 2001, Leonard Pue, the Director of Washoe County Juvenile Services called me and asked for a meeting with him and the Program Director, Mary-

Ann Wooley. My immediate thought was, "Oh no, they are going to kick us out." I dreaded the day, yet the day came and the meeting began. Before Director Pue even spoke about the purpose of the meeting, I told them that I feared they had called the meeting to tell me we could no longer do religious programs at the detention center. I will never forget Mr. Pue's response. He said, "Quite the contrary, Marvin, we have come to recognize the need to have a spiritual advisor available to the youth at all times, and considering your ability to relate and connect with them we would like to appoint you as the Chaplain for the detention center." Whoa! I sure did not see that coming.

Well, I'm a little slow sometimes, however, my doubts about being used by God began to wane as I recalled what Cynthia had been telling me all those years about God really using me in working with at-risk youth. Cynthia has been a huge supporter, visionary, encourager and one of the central figures in this ministry; and this is simply indicative of how God has used her to touch so many lives and to accomplish His will.

Cynthia, thank you. You spurred my belief in myself, my growth as a Christian, the Chaplaincy, and the vision God has given me for Sierra Nevada Teen Ranch. I honor you, I salute you, and I know without a doubt that when our Lord welcomed you home I know you heard "well done, my good and faithful servant."

## An Open Door of Trust:

### *In Memory of Skip Rackley*

Another dear friend passed on the evening of October 20th. His name is Edgar ("Skip") Rackley. I met Skip around the same time I met Cynthia, and we hit it off right away. We worked closely on the development of the Ridge House, a halfway house for men re-entering society after release from prison.

Skip was on the Board and I served as assistant house manager. I still marvel at how easily we were able to work together and enjoy each other. He and his wife, Linda, opened a balloon business (Balloons Express) and my wife Jan, myself and our two daughters were hired to do special events and work on the craziest



*Skip Rackley, a very present help to many in times of need.*

day of the year – Valentines day. It was a fun time. Skip always liked to clown around, literally; he would dress in fabulous clown outfits: wig, face paint, big nose, big feet and all. For my wife’s 40th birthday he dressed in this seven-foot tall, black “Grim Reaper” costume, complete with funeral music and sickle – my wife saw it coming up to the front door and took off out the back door running down the alley. That was Skip, a real riot. And you know what, his large torso and good sense of humor made him perfect for these parts. Skip was the best man at my wedding.

Yet Skip had a very serious side, also. He was definitely committed to the Lord and continued in ministry to the very end. It seems to me that he truly knew his real purpose in life was to minister to the downtrodden, the poor, the sick, the homeless, the shut ins. Though I did not know that to this day he was still involved in Kairos ministry at the Lovelock prison, it did not surprise me. His involvement with Kairos and with Friends and Family of Prison Inmates are indicative of who Skip really was; a man, whom my Lord has this to say about: “Come you who are blessed by my father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for



*“Lady Blue Bird” roosts on ranch land happy to be of service as our construction office — utilizing her 15K generator and providing us with lights, heat, air conditioning, water, and a fridge. Volunteers are sharpening her insides with “an extreme makeover.” Pictures next time!*

you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Yes, go your way for now my friend, for we shall meet again.

Marvin Neal, President

## Welcome Lumos & Associates



Welcome and thanks to everyone at Lumos & Associates for working with us through the cumbersome “special use” permit application submitted on Oct. 15th.

**The permit was submitted to the Washoe County Department of Community Development. The process requires a courtesy meeting with the North Valley Citizens Advisory Board on Nov. 12, 7 p.m. and a hearing for a decision with the Board of Adjustment on Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m.**

The prognosis looks great, still we are asking for good thoughts & prayer.

## A RECAP OF PROGRESS

- Acquired our 501©3 tax exempt status.
- Acquired State of Nevada Certification of Corporate Charter
- Paid cash — 30 acres surrounded by 40,000 acres of BLM land
- Access through BLM land to the Ranch land.
- Acquired 4.48 acf of water rights annually from the State
- SNTR meets BBB’s Standards and became a member
- Oasis Unveiled. Water found and the well dug.
- Passed the septic tanks and leach fields perk test
- God cleared the land with a bit of lightning

- Lumos & Associates joined the SNTR team
- Special Use Permit submitted to Washoe County
- Acquired fencing permit

We have requested permission to build four homes which will house 10 kids each, a vocational building, multipurpose/athletic building/school, a barn, and a ropes course. (Smaller amenities will be added, but do not require disclosure for the special use permit; i.e. athletic field, natural ponds, smaller sheds for tackle or storage, etc.) Our goal is to build in phases as funds become available; we will follow our commitment to build debt free. NOTE: No special use permit is needed for the building of the first home.



# CONTRIBUTIONS CORNER . . .

## . . . FOR THE GENEROUS

### Donations

- An El Camino as a raffle prize
- Voice mail messaging service
- Use of heavy equipment
- Lady Blue Bird (The BUS)
- Steel framing for the vocational building - 5000 sq. ft.
- Mobile Home donated for caretaker
- Local businesses offer building supplies
- Local contractors offer construction labor
- Financial support from many local businesses, Churches and individuals (Thanks to you all)
- SNTR web site & upkeep
- Discounted materials for our pump house

### Thank You

Cashman Equipment • Robert George • Global Studios  
 Western Mine Services • Silver State Forklift • Tel-Com  
 Triad Enterprises • Lowe's (Oddie)

## . . . FOR THE HARDWORKING

### Fencing

No, not the defensive sport, but perimeter and storage fencing for the SNTR. Recently, we applied for and received a permit to build a perimeter country-wood fence, and a storage chain-link fence on the ranch land. We need **160' of 8' high chain link fence** AND volunteers to help construct it. Mark Jacques of Sunlight Construction will oversee the project. Also, we need **2,250' of 2-rail country fencing** (wood post and rails) and volunteers to help with construction. If you can donate any of these materials or volunteer to help construct these fences, please send off an e-mail with any questions or information to [sntr@charter.net](mailto:sntr@charter.net) and when we have the materials and workers lined up, we'll set up a time to meet on the property.

## . . . FOR THE CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE

### Suggestions for raising cash:

- Have a "fun"-d raiser – you choose the fun part.
- Have a garage sale
- Have a home mystery dinner, charge admission and donate the proceeds.
- For those with a network marketing business – get creative with your resources, have a promotion with the profits going to SNTR.

- Let us know you are praying. We will include you in e-mail updates and requests.

For any of your activities, upon request, we'll provide a short SNTR presentation – or train you and provide visual aids and information.

## TIME TO RAISE THE ROOF!

### Many have asked, "How can I help?"

1) Cash contributions toward the \$208k log home kit earns a plaque placed on the wall of the first home. Plaques get larger with the levels of giving. It will also earn you recognition in our next newsletter. Go in as



a team, a church, an individual or business. Do it in memory of a loved one, or as an advertisement. Have a message inscribed to the youth saying something like, "We're rooting for you guys," "best wishes," "stay the course," "we're praying," a favorite scripture, or other words of encouragement to the youth. Get creative and have fun. (This is the shell only and we will still need help with the foundation, inner walls, finished floors, finished roof, cabinets, plumbing, electrical and other fixtures must also be added.)

### Levels are:

\$1,000 level 1	\$10,000 level 4
\$2,500 level 2	\$17,000 level 5
\$5,000 level 3	\$25,000 level 6
	\$50,000 level 7

*That's only 208 individuals at level 1, 83 at level 2, etc.*

- 2) If you are a business owner who specializes in construction materials, you may consider donating the plumbing, electrical, cabinets, flooring, roofing, cement, and/or volunteer to help build.
- 3) Become part of our PR team – those willing to pass the word.

Contact us with your ideas — E-mail us at [sntr@charter.net](mailto:sntr@charter.net), call our voice-messaging service at 775-789-2625, or write to us at P.O. Box 14954, Reno, NV 89507. Let us know if you would like to receive this newsletter by E-mail.

Website coming soon. Look for SNTR at the following: [www.sntr.org](http://www.sntr.org)

