

New Life News *



News and Stories from New Life Ranch

50 Years Celebrated

And: Summer Camp Wrap Up

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The Mission of New Life Ranch is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to equip believers for ministry.

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There are lots of reasons to come to New Life Ranch. Here are a few:

Family Camps

Mother/Daughter - April 3-5th, 2009

Mother/Son - May 1-3, 2009

Family Camp - July 9 - 12, 2009

Horsin Around

March 27-29th, 2009

Summer Camp and Leadership Development

June 7 - 13, 2009 - August 8, 2009

For information about these NLR events visit www.newliferanch.com

As August 2nd and our celebration of what God had accomplished the past 50 years at New Life Ranch approached, Ruth Heck was getting weaker and weaker. As I left her hospital room just a couple of days before the big day, my heart was troubled. Hours and hours of preparation had gone into this wonderful festivity, and we all wanted our co-founder and faithful prayer warrior to be there to experience it with us. Over a thousand people would gather to reminisce and praise God that He had used Rev. and Mrs. Heck's faith and perseverance to provide a safe haven for thousands of campers over the past 50 years.

As I was making my last appeal to God that very Saturday morning, His answer became very clear to me. He wasn't going to allow her to be at New Life Ranch because she was going to be with Him in heaven. How dare us think we could ever put on a celebration that could possibly compete with the awesome spectacle she was going to have that very day in the presence of God. At 8:55 AM just before the final summer camp send off of 2008, Jesus escorted Ruth Heck through the gates of heaven. Once again, God surpassed our dreams and strategies with His perfect plan.

I really don't know why that surprised me so much. God has been surpassing our expectations at New Life Ranch all year. There was the young man who began coming to Right Lead last year with the Colcord Alternative School. His sister was murdered a year ago last May. He used to refuse to talk about anything serious and would always turn to humor as a way to avoid talking about anything that might be painful. He has grown tremendously in the past year, and is now willing to talk about important issues. Last spring he was coming to the Ranch four different times during the week: Right Lead with the alternative school, the vaulting team, helping with the kindergarten and first grade Right Lead class, and participating with the regular high school Right Lead class. During the summer, he began our leadership training and helped out at the barn. He is now also working in the NLR kitchen. He is rising up to be a leader in many ways. God's work in him has certainly passed our expectations.

God surprised us by sending 16 inches of rain during one month and protected us as we had two guest groups here while tornadoes were touching down all around us. God also worked in the lives of our Outdoor Ministry guests. It was fun to watch them learn to trust God as they learned to trust their friends while interacting on the challenge course. Time and time again God helped them overcome fears and accomplish feats they never dreamed possible.

God also proved faithful as a 10 year old girl found a new Identity in Jesus Christ this summer. One of her brothers was killed by a drunk driver two years ago. Her other brother is in Iraq right now. Her parents are going through a divorce and a fierce custody battle over her. Through all the pain, hurt and horrible circumstances in her life, God brought her to a saving relationship with Him.

The reality of it all is that God has been surpassing expectations and carrying out His plan at New Life Ranch for over 50 years now. God reminds us of this in Isaiah 55:9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." My prayer is that we, like Willard and Ruth Heck, remain in the center of His ways and His plans as we follow the journey He has for each of us, and that we finish well and are ready for our escort into God's holy presence.



David Jaquess,
Executive Director



CAMPERS SAY...

THERE IS A LOT OF FUNNY STUFF THAT HAPPENS AT NLR. AND CAMPERS SAY SOME FUNNY THINGS. HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES FROM THIS SUMMER:

“If you can’t win, cheat, if you can’t cheat, die.”
– camper playing dodgeball

Mr. Thomas:
“Single file line guys.”
Jr. Camper:
“Don’t make fun of me for being single!”

“We can’t play against girls, when we beat them we will look like jerks and they will spread rumors about us.” – camper

“Do we get a refund because of the rain?”
– camper

Upcoming Events and Retreats:

January

- 02 Grace Church NWA Youth Retreat
- 09 Mosaic Winter Retreat
- 16 JBU Cathedral Choir Retreat
- 16 Fellowship Bible Junior High Winter Chill
- 23 Fellowship NWA Jr. High Winter Chill Out

February

- 06 New Heights Youth Retreat
- 13 Maranatha Winter Retreat
- 20 Outreach Adult Retreat
- 27 Grand Avenue Women’s Retreat

March

- 07 Fellowship NWA Children’s Retreat
- 13 Teen Challenge Family Spring Retreat
- 13 First Free Will Baptist Youth Retreat
- 14 Christ UMC Spring Retreat
- 15 TBC Jr./Sr. Work Retreat
- 27 **NLR Spring Horsin’ Around**
- 27 Rejoice Christian 10th Grade Challenge Camp
- 27 Bible Church of Little Rock Spring Youth Retreat

April

- 03 **NLR Mother/Daughter Retreat**
- 03 Pure Heart Ministries Women’s Retreat
- 07 WCA High School Retreat
- 17 **Summer Staff Work Weekend**
- 17 Tulsa Bible Family Camp
- 18 **Summer Small Group Leaders Training**
- 23 Still Waters Retreat
- 23 Life Christian Academy 8th Gr. Challenge Camp
- 24 First Nazarene 6th Grade Retreat
- 24 Rogers Christian Women’s Retreat
- 30 Women’s Aglow Fellowship

May

- 01 John Calvin Women’s Retreat
- 01 **NLR Mother/Son Retreat**
- 02 **NLR Right Lead Expo**
- 04 Life Way Christian School OE Camp
- 07 Emmanuel Christian OE Camp
- 13 Christian Heritage Academy OE Camp
- 17 Special Touch Summer Getaway
- 23 Fellowship, NWA Family Camp

Those who were brave enough to battle the heat and crowds to attend our 50th anniversary celebration at New Life Ranch were rewarded with a special treat. On that commemorative day, the leadership of NLR took the opportunity to look back at what God has done here over the last five decades. We celebrated His faithfulness in walking with us and in changing lives. We also saw our executive director, David Jaquess, stand and give a glimpse into the plans and dreams we have for future building projects. David spoke about three projects we see on the not too distant horizon. Together they will cost over \$5,000,000. This is far more than we have raised for any project at New Life Ranch and while we are apprehensive that this is outside of our capacity to complete, we know that with God all things are possible.

The three projects that David spoke of that day were: 1) A Welcome Center that will replace the original Wagon Inn building and provide new offices and game rooms as well as a new camp store and restrooms: 2) A Leadership Village that would house 125 Leadership Development campers and provide them with meeting spaces: and 3) A Conference Center that would remove the crowding problems in the current Chapel with a new 500 seat auditorium, a smaller meeting room, and state of the art audio and video systems.

After much prayer and consideration, the New Life Ranch Board of Directors has decided that we will pursue the building of the Conference Center. This building, when completed, will be the largest building on New Life Ranch property. It will be located between the barn and the gymnasium and will become the primary meeting space for large groups at NLR.

This project will include removing the current maintenance shop and building a new one in the valley behind the gymnasium out of the main camp area. One horse corral will also be removed to make room for this new building.

The cost of the entire project is estimated to be \$1,400,000. This is by far the largest project in our 50 year history. We have begun preliminary fund raising and believe that God will provide the remaining needed funds within one year. The goal is bold, especially in times of financial uncertainty, but we believe this is the direction God is leading so we are trusting Him and stepping forward in faith.

I encourage you to begin praying about your participation in this project. It will take more people stretching further than ever before. I also ask that you pray for us as we move ahead with this exciting opportunity. Details will soon be coming out about how you can partner with us in funding this project.

We know that within the walls of this new Conference Center campers will learn that they have a God who loves them, families will worship together, lives will be changed and new direction will be found. We ask for your prayers as we step out in faith with this project. May God Bless you and keep you this Christmas.



Justin Heimer
Justin Heimer,
Director of Development



Artist Concept

Throughout my 35 years of life, I have never experienced anything like my 14 summers spent at New Life Ranch. But it wasn't just the fun of swimming in the creek or singing crazy songs in Morning Camp Party, it was all about the relationships. The campers living life with summer staff, the summer staff living life with each other, and ultimately all those relationships coming down to the common denominator of Jesus Christ. I had never seen or appreciated the power of these relationships until I took a full-time position at New Life Ranch. To see a person go from camper, to summer staffer, to fully connected adult in Christ is amazing.

Brad Ruttman was one of those campers. Brad first ventured on to NLR's property as a camper in 1986. "NLR started out as just a fun place to go, but turned into a place where I would grow the most in my relationship with God," says Brad. Throughout the next 8 summers, Brad gained some incredible memories during Bible memory, worship and evening chapels. He also found relationships like he had never found before with campers and staffers. "I saw the greatest commandment, the second greatest commandment, and the Great Commission being lived out on a daily basis." It was through these relationships that Brad deepened his relationship with Jesus Christ and would eventually become a Counselor-in-Training (1993-1994) and Summer Staffer (1995-1997 & 1999).

The people are what Brad remembers most about being on summer staff. "For many summers I got to see incredible men and women of God work on staff, and their servants hearts were definitely an inspiration to me. To this day, they may not remember me, but I always remember them and their Christian influence on me even as staffer." Through life with the other staff he realized his position with Christ: that being saved by grace he was the workmanship of God and that he was created to do great things for the Kingdom. "I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to serve on summer staff at NLR. I enjoyed seeing campers return year after year, and as I moved on in life, seeing them grow in Christ and even join the summer staff themselves." Brad continues to want to give back what the summer staff at NLR gave him during his 8 summers as a camper.

What would Brad do with all the fond memories and the relationships that he formed at NLR? He would stay connected. Even though Brad now lives in Tulsa with his wife Stephanie and sons JJ and Christian (and one more on the way) and flies F-16's for the US Air Force, he stays connected. "What keeps me connected to NLR are the friends I still have there. Brad also finds every excuse to return to the Ranch. "The annual events like staff reunions and the 50th anniversary will always keep me coming back to the



THE POWER OF NLR RELATIONSHIPS: TO IRAQ AND BACK STORY BY SCOTT SHAW

NLR Staff Alumni are all over the world, including Brad, who flies for the US Air Force in Iraq.

place where I have such fond memories."

But there are other ways Brad has stayed connected that he won't brag about. First of all, Brad has supported many of us on full-time staff with his prayers and financial giving. Brad's gifts have helped our staff continue to minister to each guest that comes on the grounds. It is through people partnering with us that the gospel continues to be shared and allows campers, like Brad, to

come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Secondly, Brad has served a couple of tours in Iraq and he always takes a piece of NLR with him. In his first tour, Brad posted an NLR sticker on his F-16 that went on multiple missions over the skies of Iraq. Brad is now on his second tour in Iraq and is flying with an American flag that will eventually come back to NLR and be flown over the grounds.

Many people that come through NLR have similar connections. Through prayer, financial giving or sending their child to camp, they all support the ministry of New Life Ranch. These relationships are a vital and powerful part of others coming to know Christ. We invite you to partner with us and Brad in continuing to allow NLR to minister to a world that so desperately needs Christ. *

For more information on partnering with NLR email Justin Heimer at justin@newliferanch.com.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration was a great time to see old faces, sing along to a few old theme songs, enjoy some great food, and to take a long awaited go at the rings one last time. The day also held a lot of conversations about how great it was to connect, and how great it would be to do more events like this. Well, we are giving all past NLR Summer Staff Alumni that chance. Recently we sent out our very first NLR Summer Staff Alumni Connections email. This email gave an overview of what Connections is going to be about and how we could use your help. If you didn't get the email, that means we don't have your email address, so let us know what it is!

We are excited to kick off a monthly NLR Summer Staff Alumni Updates email. It will be a great way to keep everybody up to date on what is going on at NLR and in each others lives.

We need your help! Send us your story! Where are you at now? Send us your family news and pictures to keep alumni up-to-date. We also need a few people who are interested in serving on an alumni committee to help put together events and plan activities to enhance the NLR alumni community. Send your stories, ideas and thoughts to Scott@newliferanch.com. If you would like to help out, let us know! *

Unlikely Success

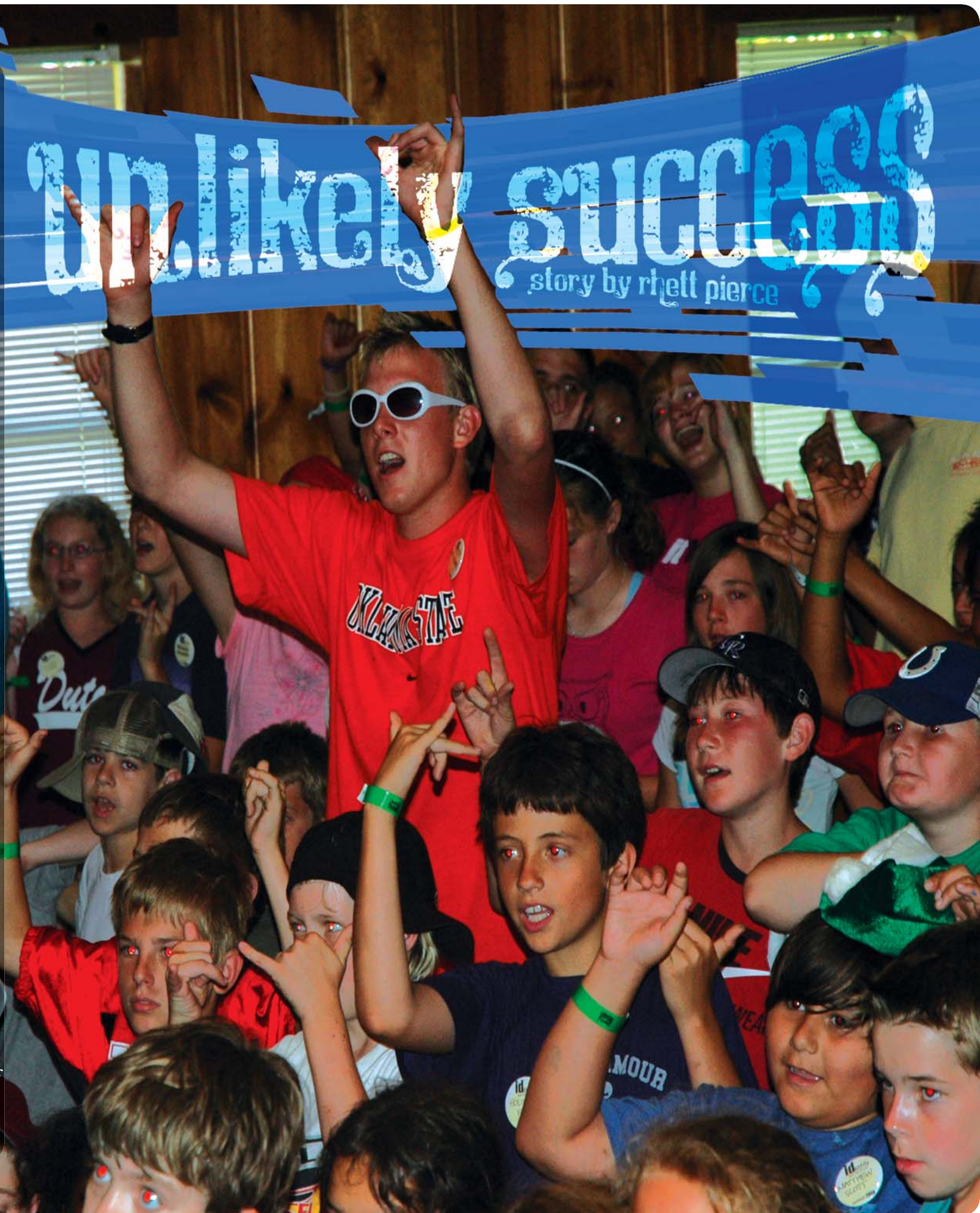
story by rhett pierce

It just can't work that way, there are just too many things working against it. You really think 71 college students each with vastly different backgrounds, unique personalities, skill sets and character flaws will unite under one purpose? There's no way man. Students today are unwilling to humble themselves and work for a larger good. Culture is too self-centered. It can't and won't be done.

It's true, in theory it should never work. Fortunately for New Life Ranch's summer campers, theories do not always translate into truth.

For the summer of 2008, the flaw in this theory proved true once again. In God's Son, believers have someone who unites despite differences, designs talents and uses flaws for good. When Christ's message and God's purpose become the sole focus of a group of unique, talented but flawed individuals, theories have a habit of proving untrue.

This summer, NLR summer staff came from 24 different colleges and universities. Many were getting ready to start college, two were heading off to seminary, and some were heading to the "real world." Majors varied from many "undecideds" to pre-med students. Four guys are studying engineering at their self-proclaimed "Nerd School."



There were Arkansans, Illinoisans (yep, that's actually what they are called), Kansans, a Louisianan, a Minnesotan, Missourians, North Carolinians, Oklahomans, a Tennessean and we even allowed a few Texans. The global trek did not stop there: two countries were also represented. Indonesia is home for one of our counselors who grew up there with his missionary parents. Another staffer from the land Down Under found us through an unknown reference in New Jersey. After contacting NLR through the web and going through the hiring process, he traveled from Sydney, Australia to Colcord, Oklahoma for, in his words, "the adventure of a lifetime."

Staffers who completed the entire Leadership Development program were as young as 17 but most were in the 18-23 range. The group would not have been complete without our resident summer staff family, the Grants, who range from 9 to around "50ish."

Other factors could have been a distraction had the staff been working towards a lesser mission. For instance, as a college graduate, how would you have liked to have your younger sister as boss? How about postponing your engagement until when it wasn't quite as ideal for you in order to avoid it being any sort of distraction? The stories do not end there but I will.

The gifts and talents of the staff are almost too numerous to list. The trials they have gone through are too much to remember; the factors working against them are too hard to beat by themselves.

Christians hear the phrase "the body of Christ" used in many ways but many have not had the opportunity or blessing to see it firsthand at work. Despite differences, potentially divisive factors and sinful natures, the summer staff at NLR come together to accomplish a mission greater than each of them could accomplish as individuals. What truly could not be accomplished on their own happens each summer at the Ranch due solely to the 70+ college students who are willing to commit their lives to the Lord's calling. Due to this willingness, over two thousand lives were changed this summer.

I Corinthians 12:12-13 & 18-20 describes it best, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink...But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body." ✱



New Life Ranch marked their 50th year of ministry on Saturday, August 2nd, with an open house celebration. Over 1000 guests and staff gathered to celebrate the anniversary with an afternoon of entertainment, reunions and summer camp activities.

“The first 50 years of New Life Ranch have been a time of continuous growth and change, but one thing has stayed the same: our commitment to sharing the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with all who come on the grounds,” said Director of Ministries Scott Shaw. “We wanted to celebrate that with those who have been part of those 50 years.”

The afternoon began with opportunities for visitors to participate in many camp activities, including swimming in the pool and Flint Creek, experiencing the Challenge Course, or taking a pony ride. New Life Ranch (NLR) summer staff also provided a country carnival for children complete with carnival games, face painting and crafts.

One highlight of the afternoon was the Theme Song Concert performed by Chris King and Cass Harris. In 1997, Chris King began writing a song each year to accompany the summer camp theme. He wanted the songs to always remind people of the experiences and lessons learned at New Life Ranch. Past campers and staff were able to do just that as the band played first the songs written by King and then those Harris has written the past eight years.>>

Celebrating 50 Years of God's Faithfulness

Story by Molly Bunton

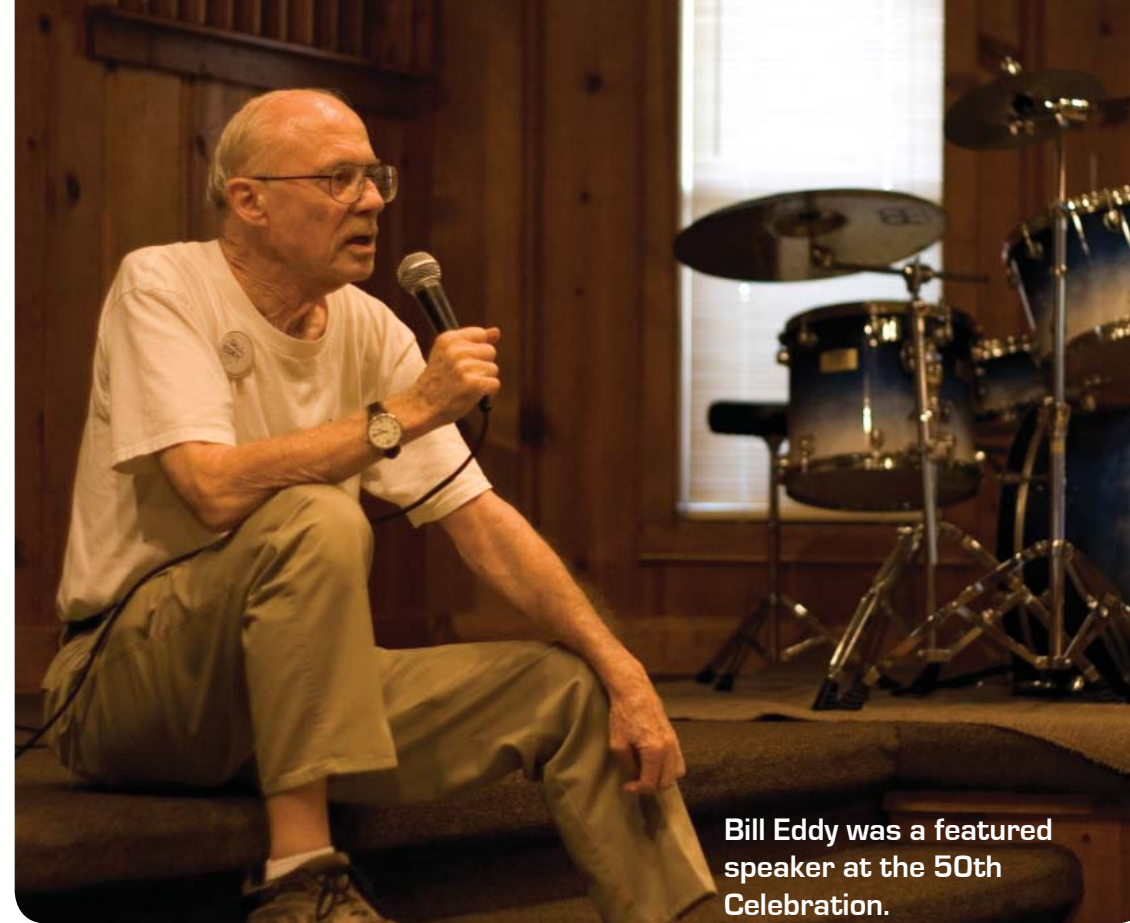




Executive Director David Jaquess says, "New Life Ranch is not about buildings, it's about people." The relationships formed at New Life Ranch are what make each person's experience special. Visitors had the opportunity to reconnect with old friends during the afternoon. Grouped by the decades of involvement with New Life Ranch, people gathered to share stories of their time as campers and staffers.

Testimony time, a NLR tradition, completed the afternoon's activities. During this gathering, individuals shared stories of the way experiences at New Life Ranch had impacted their lives.

Guests and staff continued to enjoy time together over dinner in the NLR dining hall, cookout area and new Sports Court. After dinner, everyone gathered in the Sports Court for the Closing Ceremonies service. NLR Board President, Jon Petersen, shared an overview of the past, present and future of New Life Ranch's ministries and announced the passing of NLR founder Rev. Willard Heck's wife, Ruth Heck, early that morning. He spoke of the faithful service of the Hecks and read Ruth's reflections on the anniversary. Kent



Bill Eddy was a featured speaker at the 50th Celebration.

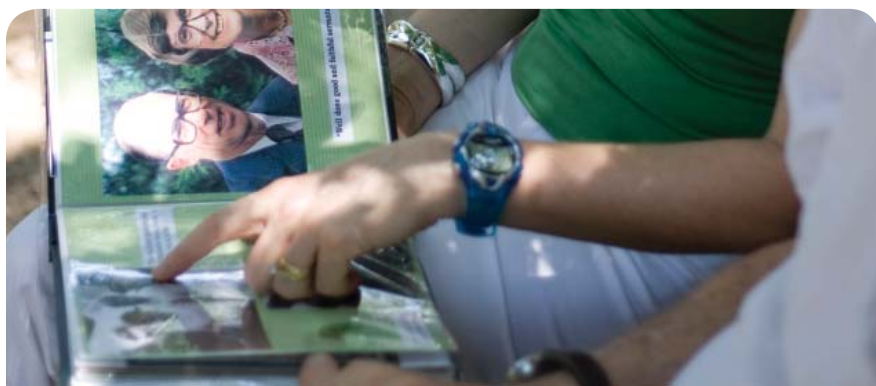


Cass Harris and Chris King played a concert of NLR Theme Songs.

I try to realize the scope of this undertaking and a momentary fear sweeps over me. The promise of God to accomplish what He begins encourages me. He is leading; we must follow.(Willard Heck, 1958)

Dempsey, former NLR program director, also shared about the significance of the past 50 years at New Life Ranch. To conclude the evening, Chris King and Cass Harris led the audience in a time of worship.

New Life Ranch offers a range of programming and services to youth, families, schools, organizations and churches. Though the means have changed and broadened over the past 50 years, the mission of New Life Ranch has remained the same as when Willard and Ruth Heck first began New Life Ranch. It is a valley set apart for the glory of God. *



Outdoor Education



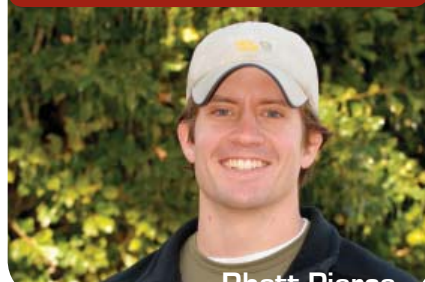
Sam Moreton

Community Ministries



Kerri Brown

Summer Camp



Rhett Pierce

Leadership Development



Eric Sullivan

Adventure Ministries



Luke Freeman

Retreat Ministry



John Blair

Family Camps

There is always something going on at NLR! Check out these updates for our seven areas of ministry. Each area serves a unique role in helping us fulfill our mission of proclaiming the Gospel and equipping believers for ministry.

Community Ministries

I first met eight-year-old Kevin this past summer. We would meet the kids each Monday evening at their apartment complex, walk them to the park, play games and learn Bible stories together. Most kids would run to us as soon as they saw us approaching, but Kevin watched from a distance. He was new to the area and spoke no English. We encouraged him to join us, but he was shy and went the other way instead.

Today I know a different Kevin. Julia, a mother at the apartments who received Christ this summer and understands what we are about, spoke with Kevin's mother and explained

to her that Kevin would have the opportunity to ride horses with people she has found to be loving and trustworthy. As the other students spoke of the opportunity to ride horses, Kevin began to have a spark of desire, and his mother gave him permission to be a part of Right Lead.

Recently I went to his school to pick him up for Right Lead and the office lady said, "Kevin had to go to the dentist today and get a tooth pulled. When he got back to school he kept bleeding and the nurse wanted to send him home. Kevin began crying frantically because he didn't want to miss getting to ride his horse!"

As I write this article, it is the 5th week of Right Lead. I could tell that Kevin seemed to understand English on the 1st week, but I never heard him speak in English until his session yesterday. He got to go on his first trail ride. As we rode up the steep hill, Kevin yelled very clearly, "This is so cool!" And as I rode up the hill in front of him, my heart felt the same. Yes, this is so cool!



Outdoor Education

Building fires using primitive tools ignites my confidence. Striking tempered steel with a flint rock creates the spark that results in a flame. Dry fuel, collected and organized, helps sustain the flame to create a blaze. Even without a group of learners watching over my shoulder, I want to shout, "I Made Fire!"

Sometimes, I am unable to create the spark. Some days it is too windy, wet or I am in a hurry. I am motivated to keep trying because I know that only one spark is needed to create a blaze.

Just like creating a spark with steel and flint increases my fire building confidence, witnessing spiritual transformation builds my faith. It's the impetus to serve at NLR. Committed

to purposeful program design, our goal is to create outdoor learning experiences that encourage people to consider their relationship with God. Witnessing eyes light up with understanding or having a camper tell me of their decision to accept Christ, fuels my fire.

Sometimes, regardless of how creatively the Word of God is presented, it seems to fall on deaf ears. Sometimes, responses are immediate if a camper is broken and spiritually dry. But in most cases, change requires long term discipleship by committed followers of Christ. I am reminded that life change does not happen through my efforts but through the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. I'm just responsible to keep the sparks flying!



Fire building takes patience, persistence, and big lungs!

Leadership Development

The Leadership Development Program continues to be an agent of change for high school students. The first level of the program, the Nehemiah Team, has expanded to over six times its size since its beginning in 1999. As it continues to grow, we hope to make the appropriate changes that would allow for smooth expansion.

The LIT and CIT programs are experiencing changes that will hopefully direct participants more specifically into their individual calling and gifts. Part of that change includes a name modification for both. The LIT's will now be called the Timothy Team due to the program's focus on discipleship, reflecting the relationship between Timothy and Paul. The CIT program will now be called SOMA, which is the Greek word for "body." The name change is due to a wider range of responsibilities and contributions from different areas of camp, beyond counseling.

The Leadership Development Program is constantly being rethought in order to maintain relevancy to students living in the real world, experiencing real issues. In all that is changing, our goal remains to help move high school students from being influenced to becoming influencers. >>

Family Camps

Each summer New Life Ranch hosts a Family Camp designed to bring families together for a time of fun, learning, and relaxation away from the demands of everyday life at home. For many parents Family Camp is an opportunity to get to know our awesome summer staff and to do activities they have heard their kids talk about so fondly after their week of summer camp. Family Camp is a special time for individual families to have common experiences in a Christian setting, and to develop further unity together in Christ.

In 2008, our Family Camp speaker was Sam Hannon who is the Family Minister at Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. He shared with the adults the importance of families being the primary spiritual influence of their children and gave practical advice on how to teach and talk about spiritual matters on a regular basis. While the adults were in their teaching sessions, the kids participated in their own camp activities and Bible study lessons. One of the highlights of this year's Family Camp was our Family Country Fair. Families enjoyed carnival games, pony rides, a square dance, an inflatable climbing wall/slide and hayrides on the unique NLR hay bus.

We are already looking forward to Family Camp 2009. Mark your calendars and join us (or encourage another family to come) on July 9-12, 2009 for another great year of family fun.



Creek Hikes are a great way for campers to get outside and enjoy God's creation during Summer Camp and Family Camp.

Summer Camp

When a change agent is introduced to something, the object or person will never be the same. If you only have two atoms of hydrogen, you haven't got much. But add in a little oxygen and you have something special. Add Martin Luther King to the volatile civil rights movement of the 60's and millions of lives are changed. Add green food coloring to your eggs and ham and you've entered the world of Doctor Seuss.

During the summer of 2009, we will be looking at the greatest "Change Agent" of them all, Jesus Christ. His 33 years on earth not only shaped the culture and beliefs of His time, His influence altered the future of the entire world! His influence is unique and will never be matched. So what made Him so special? He really did all of that for me? How do I respond to His Word? Join us for summer camp 2009 as we aim to answer these questions and more!

Retreats

Each year as summer camp wraps up, summer staff transition back into their lives as college students, and campers head back to school, New Life Ranch also transitions into a place for Christian organizations to come for a day, week, or weekend retreat. The purpose of our retreat ministry is make New Life Ranch a safe, comfortable, and easy place for ministry to happen. We do this by having staff willing and available to serve- meeting the needs of groups before and during their time here, so that group leaders can focus on ministering to their guests once they arrive at NLR. Since the end of summer we have had the opportunity to partner with over 20 different retreat

groups. During these retreats it is evident that God uses this "Valley Set Apart" to get people out of their daily routine, away from the distractions of everyday life, so that He can work in their hearts. At the conclusion of each weekend we often hear guests comment on the real and tangible experience they have had with God during their time here. It is our hope that these experiences will initiate change in a person's life so that they can go back into their home, school, work and community ready to affect their world for God's glory. If you are interested in finding out more about booking a retreat at NLR, please contact John Blair at john@newliferanch.com or visit our web site under Retreats.



The Challenge Course is an important part of our Retreats Ministry, as well as our Adventure Ministries.

Adventure Ministries

The words "experiential education" often conjure up images of touchy feely "I'm okay, you're okay" affirming activities, but in our Adventure Ministries programs at NLR, we use experiential activities as a tool to bring people into a place where they can be impacted by the Holy Spirit. Using activities that break down emotional barriers, challenge preconceived notions, and empower groups and individuals to make responsible decisions; our staff facilitates spiritual growth in a dynamic learning environment.

The people that we serve are diverse. With Challenge Camps we work with upper elementary or secondary students to help them achieve a healthier community in which to live and learn. We also regularly get the opportunity to provide Team Building programs for youth groups seeking to build communities of emotional safety. Church and other non-profit staff are also served by our Team Building programs, as they seek to do ministry as an efficient and healthy team. In addition, we love to serve retreat guests and summer campers on our Challenge Course.

If you or your group are in need of adventure give us a call. We would love to chat about your group's unique needs and design a program that will be empowering, challenging, and loads of fun! *

A champion of faith, prayer warrior, and God's hands are just some of the words that describe the late Ruth Heck and the impact her life had on others.

Ruth Heck went home to be with the Lord on August 2, 2008 which was no doubt God's perfect timing. The morning of the 50th Anniversary Celebration of New Life Ranch, Ruth passed peacefully to heaven with angels, the Lord and her husband welcoming her, and I am sure she heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Ruth was born October 6th, 1917, in Wallkill, NY and married Willard B. Heck on July 27, 1940 in Westwood, NJ. Willard and Ruth came to Oklahoma with the Children's Bible Mission in 1946. In 1955 they founded Tulsa Bible Church, and in 1957 they turned the pastorate of Tulsa Bible over to another minister.

During this time the Lord placed on Willard and Ruth's hearts a call to further their ministry in the form of Christian Summer Camps. The Lord provided 1,000 acres, known as "Kellems Ranch" which was given the name New Life Ranch. Willard wrote in his journal, "We believe that the Lord will be pleased if we name the grounds 'New Life Ranch.' This name best describes what we anticipate the Lord will do for those who come under its program." January 23, 1958.

Ruth was known as a prayer warrior, one who was in tune with the Lord and prayed daily asking for changed lives. An excerpt out of Willard's journal reads, "We are reminded of the verse, 'I being in the way, the Lord led me.' How our faith comes alive and is increased at the evidence of God at work!" The Lord indeed was at work at New Life Ranch.

After 25 years of ministry Ruth and Willard courageously stepped away from New Life Ranch. The following was recorded at that time, in March of 1982:

"Twenty-five years are now history at New Life Ranch. We have been asked several times if we ever envisioned the growth now seen here. That we have prayed and worked to fulfill a dream must be admitted. I doubt that a full vision of what is now evident could ever have been in mind 25 years ago. I see great potentials for the next 25 years. But where will NLR be in 2007 (contingent on the plans of God for Christ's return, of course)?"

God is the same today—He will be in 2007! We often wonder where NLR would be if our faith had been greater. Our prayer is, 'Lord increase our faith.'

"They will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Revelation 14:13b.

For the next 25 years, Ruth remained active in New Life Ranch affairs through prayer and encouragement. She was generous with resources, supporting all resident staff and occasionally came for visits.

Two years ago the staff and board began planning the 50th Anniversary Celebration. Ruth, along with her children and grandchildren were looking forward to the historic celebration. Not long into the summer, Ruth became ill, but still she insisted that she and her family make the 80-mile trip to the celebration, even if they had to "wheel her in on a gurney."

But our Lord, in His perfect timing, had a bigger celebration for her in Heaven, where she saw Jesus face to face and joined those who went before her in praise of our Lord and Savior.

The spiritual legacy left by Ruth Heck will continue for generations to come. Though her journey here on earth is done, her love and faithfulness to the Lord will endure.

Ruth was preceded in death by her husband, Willard, and son, Allan. She is survived by her children, Daniel and Joan Heck of Austin, daughter-in-law, Donna Heck of Broken Arrow, Lowell and Joanne Heck of Tulsa; her grandchildren, Shane and Jennifer Heck of Ada, Suzy and Michael Holt of Lowell, AR and Jennifer Heck of Tulsa. *



Celebrating the life of Ruth Heck

Story by Sarah Heimer



Ruth and Willard Heck founded New Life Ranch in 1958. They remained involved with NLR their entire lives, even after leaving their full time ministry positions.

New Life Ranch

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The West 40, Ally Schultz

If you have an interesting picture from NLR we want to see it! Just send it to info@newliferanch.com with a short description. We might even publish it in the next New Life News.

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