

## **Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp**

## Newsletter

## Spring 2020



#### Fall High-School Retreat

Friday, November, 6—Monday, November 8
Enjoy a relaxing weekend spent in a community with worship, Bible study, downtime, and new friends! This weekend is intended to build community in a low key setting during the busy time of the

school year.



#### October Work Weekend

Friday, October 9—Sunday, October 11

Meals and lodging are provided free of charge.

We have projects for all ages and abilities!

Register online at:

www.skyranchcolorado.org/mdww



#### BBQ & Bluegrass

Sunday, June 14 2:00 pm—3:00pm

Online Auction, Music, and Worship
Keep up to date on this event by visiting
our website, Facebook, and Twitter pages
All proceeds benefit Sky Ranch!

# From the Executive Director

By Brad Abbott

During this time of pandemic, I am reminded that in our Lutheran heritage, there is always law **and** gospel. So here is the Law and Gospel at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp during this crisis.

Law - As we continue to monitor updates regarding COVID-19, we want you to know that the Health, Safety and Well-being of our campers, staff, and families is of utmost importance. As a result, on May 4, 2020, the Sky Ranch Board of Directors, attentive to the directives of federal, state, and local health agencies, made the difficult decision to suspend all planned programs and keep the property closed until at least June 27. different than most congregations in that over 60% of our income comes from program fees directly related to our programs, most of them on site. No camp = no campers = no income, while many of our overhead costs remain.

Now, hear the Good News of the Gospel - Sky Ranch is a ministry that has shaped the faith lives of tens of

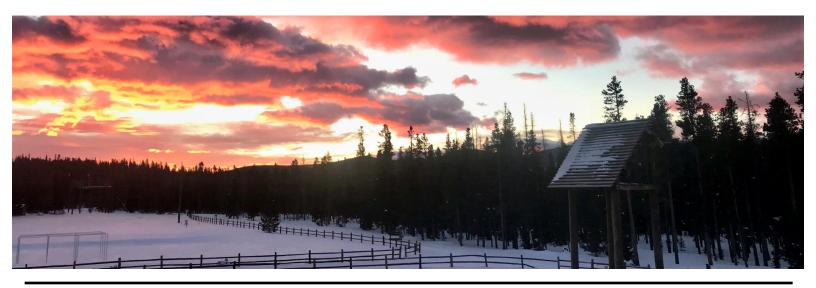
thousands of youth and adults over the past 57 years. Through fires, floods. evacuations, and inhabiting our lodge, this ministry has persevered. This summer will be no different...although will it look radically different. While we are in a time of crisis, we are also in a time of opportunity and innovation. Skv Ranch is determined to be a light in this darkness that seems overwhelming.

Sky Ranch is not just a place. We partner with families, congregations, the synod, and the larger church to provide a variety of Christ centered programs. And those programs are led by people, our staff, the most important resource we have. I am honored by their selflessness and passion to serve.

Amid this pandemic, we are excited to welcome Cole Hemmah as our High School Program Director! Onboarding staff during a "Stay at Home" order has proven to be an interesting challenge. Having graduated from Black Hills State University, with a degree in Outdoor Education, Cole served as an intern with the South Dakota, Game, Fish & Parks Department and was an Off-site Coordinator and Guide at Sky Ranch. The only constant at camp is change, so the staff at Sky Ranch is ready to

respond. While we may not know what the future holds for camp, we are looking at faithful and creative ways to offer ministry this summer. Last month the Sky Ranch Board voted unanimously to fund and train the 30+ summer staff that we had already hired prior to the shutdowns associated with this pandemic. While this may present financial challenges, our Board believes this is a vital investment in the present and future leadership of our church. Equipping and empowering our summer staff to serve is our mission.

This means that Sky Ranch's summer ministry will happen, even if we don't know exactly how...YET. Our summer staff are being trained and will serve in ministry, even if our site isn't open to campers. Camp will look different this summer, but our staff will be ready to serve. Their creativity and passion will allow ministry to happen wherever and whenever possible. If you have specific ideas on how Sky Ranch can support you or your congregation, please contact us. During this unique period of social distancing, I am repeatedly humbled by the generosity and encouragement from all who continue to give to this ministry. We can't do it without your help. Please pray for patience, have hope, and know that God is with us.



### From the High School Program Director



By Cole Hemmah

My first experience at Sky Ranch was as a counselor, summer 2015. I was welcomed with open arms from people who had never met me or even knew my name, but they made me feel like I was returning rather than just arriving. Over the next four summers I would meet some of the most important and influential people to me, who I am lucky enough to still have in my daily life. How I try to show up in the world, how my faith has formed, and the direction I have taken my career; have all been shaped by the values shared at Sky Ranch.

This position comes with so many opportunities to make an impact on Sky Ranch's programming. The high school programs are where I have felt the best connection with campers, on and offsite. With camp's location the backpacking program has endless potential. Building up a competent, knowledgeable group of guides is one of my main objectives as a program director. Every summer the dynamic between the offsite staff has been and will be different but making sure everyone has the tools to keep their group comfortable and safe (with a little fun on the side) will be my goal each year. This group will also be

able to take their skills down the mountain and share them with other organizations through our Four-Winds Program. This is where I have gotten to see the most dramatic and powerful changes in a young person. Sometimes it is hard to remember that there are so many people in the world living such different lives than your own. Our Four-Winds Program gives groups the opportunity to live, work, and genuinely help in a place they might never get to, with people who have experiences very different than some of us. My goal with Four-Winds is to make solid connections with the different programs we work with down the mountain, in order to create the most effective experience for both participating groups.

With how much Sky Ranch has formed the person I've become I feel called to be continue the ministry done here, and hopefully I can give back to the campers and staff who will be joining our community in the coming years.



# From the Youth & Outreach Program Director

By Jeff Fairfax

Rainbow in the Sky:

Blessings and Peace from all of us at Sky Ranch, I hope this finds you well! As so many of us are adapting to social distancing measures and stay-at-home orders we are forced to re-think being community and what that looks and feels like in the midst of continuing our journeys of faith. Much like congregations, outdoor ministries across the country are adapting. There are approximately 119 ELCA affiliated outdoor ministry sites across the country including three here in Colorado. Sky Ranch and Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp (RTLC) are the two you have probably heard of, but recently through a gift from Messiah Community Church -Denver to the Rocky Mountain Synod-ELCA (RMS) there is now a third, Messiah Mountain Retreat Center. When the social distancing and stay-at-home orders began here in Colorado, the RMS began to invite different groups of ministry

professionals to gather weekly for support and resource sharing. One of these groups that both Sky Ranch and RTLC are active in is the Faith Formation Network. This group is now meeting weekly to be support for our colleagues across the synod. Camps are connected with congregations and one of the ideas mentioned was a need/want from congregations and kids for a camp experience. Camp is a highlight for many youth and adults each year and we wanted to continue to be that highlight in these uncertain times. Sky Ranch and Rainbow Trail heard the call and created a 6 week daily devotion called Rainbow in the Sky Live! This joint venture was a way for the camps to support our communities in times when we would normally be present for various outreach opportunities. Rainbow in the Sky was hosted by the RMS on their Facebook page Monday through Thursday at 3pm. As I write this, we are in our fourth week of broadcasts and our themes

so far have been community, time, and creation. This week we are exploring service with the following two weeks being hope and praise. Each day consisted of an opening (song performed or played, meditation, invocation), scripture or sacred text, prayer, content activity, and closes with a sending activity that families can do afterward at home. There has been widespread excitement from around the country with each video receiving anywhere from 1,000 -4,000 views. Rainbow in the Sky was recently featured in a Living Lutheran article titled, "Meeting an Unprecedented Moment". We are continually grateful for our partners in ministry at RTLC and the continued collaboration between our organizations to navigate these unprecedented times and be a light in the world for so many! If you have not seen the videos, they can be found on the Rocky Mountain Synod-ELCA Facebook page or shared on each camp's respective Facebook pages. Blessings!



#### From the Board of Directors

By Stacie Hanson

Stacie Hanson is an Alumni from the 1999 summer staff. She is a new member of our Board of Directors and is a member of Highlands Lutheran Church in Denver. Stacie also has two daughters who are now campers at Sky Ranch

As I write this, our family has been social distancing for exactly a month, following Colorado's COVID-19 rules. We've been learning and working from home, and we haven't seen our friends and family in person in what feels like a long time. We've had good days and bad days as we adjust to our new normal. And throughout this experience, one word keeps popping into my head: Connection. Connections create love and empathy; they create our humanity. We are intricately connected to each other and to God. But connections also create pathways for a novel virus and serve as the foundation for a global economy that cannot be sustained when the links are broken.

And so here we are. Humans yearn to be connected, but we're isolated in our homes to protect ourselves and others. So we must find new and different ways of situation will turn out, or even what camp might look connecting. Virtual happy hours with friends near and like this summer. But I do know that we need to far, group texts, corporate Zoom meetings, and virtual games with grandparents. While I'm so glad we have these options, it's also not what I crave right now. In a society where we were all glued to our devices, we are finding that our technology is not quite enough.

For me, Sky Ranch has always served as a unique opportunity for connection. Campers are taken out of their everyday experience to connect with new friends, nature, and God in a safe, loving, accepting space. Young adults make lifelong friends and have mountaintop experiences while working as counselors. And guess what? There's no WiFi or cell service up there, which amplifies those human connections even

Last year my two daughters were old enough to do Roundup, where they spent 2 nights up at camp. When I came on Tuesday to pick them up and watch them lead worship, their cabinmate was standing up at the front with my daughters, leaning casually with her head on my daughter's shoulder. They had met just 2 days earlier, but they stood up there together like lifelong friends. I will always have this picture in my mind when I think of Sky Ranch, a place where kids are loved for everything they are and make fierce and loving connections.

None of us can see the future. We don't know how this support the future of Sky Ranch, because every child needs this unique opportunity for connection. When the world gets back to normal and we have kept our communities safe, those connections will be more important than ever.

## **Coyote Howl Confirmation Retreat**

September 25-27, 2020

The Coyote Howl Confirmation Retreat creates a sacred space for confirmation students to build upon a foundation which will travel back with them to their home congregations. Coyote Howl offers community building, Bible Study, worship and fellowship with youth from throughout the Rocky Mountain Synod. Alongside our dynamic, energetic and passionate staff, youth will explore the way that God is at work in their individual communities along with how their connection to one another essentially shapes their journey of faith.

> For more information and to register please visit: www.skyranchcolorado.org/covote-howl



## Meet the 2020 Summer Staff!

These dedicated young adults are joining us from around the country for a summer of ministry and service at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp.

Our staff brings many diverse gifts and share the call to minister to children in the mountains of Colorado. Camp has long been a place where young people can use their gifts and this call to become leaders in the church.

We can't wait to see our staff grow in service, faith, leadership, and fun this summer!

Please pray for these young adults as they seek new ways to preform their ministries this summer.



Emma Alpern Wartburg College Littleton, CO



Megan Barnhouse
Pacific Lutheran University
Westminster, CO



Sophia Behrens Valparaiso University Wellington, CO



Chris Clark
California Lutheran
Newbury Park, CA



Mykayla Coe Colorado State University Littleton, CO



Jessie Dougherty
Pacific Lutheran University
White Bear Lake, MN



Julia Gromm Toneheim Folkhogskole Ottawa, IL



Grace Gutierrez
Pacific Lutheran University
Spokane Valley, WA



Chloe Halvorson
University of Colorado
Fort Collins, CO



Anna Luber Luther College Peosta, IA



Tiffany Miller Grad– Augustana Sioux Falls Hinton, IA



Megan Milroy University of Wisconsin St. Cloud, MN



Maggie Nieberger
Pacific Lutheran University
Erie, CO



Michael Novotny
University of Wisconsin
West Bend, WI



Grace Ricard

Minnesota State University

North Benson, MN



Dani Scheuermann St. Olaf Boulder, CO



Olivia Strang
Bowling Green State
University
Bowling Green, OH



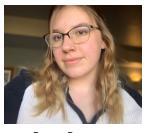
Payton Trahnstrom Grad – Colorado Mesa University Lander, WY



Josh Walter Summer Cook Fort Collins, CO



Emma Blundell
University of Wyoming
Loveland, CO



Becca Brunner Laramie County Community College Cheyenne, WY



Julie Gerrish
Pacific Lutheran Theological
Seminary
Phoenix, AZ



Jordan Green Colorado State University Littleton, CO



Tony Klagge St. Olaf Loveland, CO



Annie Lind Gustavus Adolphus Cambridge, MN



Maddy Reed
Colorado School of Mines
Longmont, CO



Katie Jo Remmers Grad– Colorado Mesa University Fort Collins, CO



Sarah Weaver
Grad—Baylor University
Flower Mound, TX



Josh Williams Grad- Valparaiso University Chicago, IL

#### **Sky Ranch Board of Directors**

Sky Ranch's Board of Directors have taken on the fiduciary management and responsibility during these difficult times. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers



Eric Schranck Joy: Parker President



Lindsay Reiten
Trinity: Fort Collins
Vice President



RC Reiman
Ascension: Cheyenne
Treasurer



Kim Kelty Glory of God: Wheatridge Secretary



Kristen Baltrum Bethlehem: Longmont Past President



Don Alpern Christ: Highlands Ranch



Rob Behrens
Our Saviours: Fort Collins



Pr. Katie Emery First: Longmont



Stacie Hanson Highlands: Denver



Reuben Jackson Trinity: Fort Collins



Pr. Paul Judson
CSU Campus Ministry



Pr. Ruth Ann Loughry King of Glory: Loveland



Pr. Rob Moss

Lutheran Church of the Master: Lakewood



Michael Weier
Our Saviour's: Salt Lake City



Pr. Leslie O'Callaghan Synod Rep

## **Spring Property Update**

Sky Ranch continues to prepare for another amazing summer of ministry in the mountains! Each summer our group of dedicated staff and volunteers maintain our facilities so all guests can have the best possible experience while they are with us. Our daily cleaning procedures are dictated by industry best practices as well as the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment.

As we look to this summer and the uncertainties that the Coronavirus pandemic brings, the health, safety and well-being of our staff, campers, families, and communities are our highest priority. To that end, Sky Ranch is actively enhancing our daily cleaning procedures based on recommendations from Larimer County to include constant disinfecting of high contact surfaces such as door handles/knobs, light switches, handrails, tables, chairs, food prep areas, sports equipment, bathrooms, etc. In addition we will be making changes to meal time procedures such as utilizing our chuckwagon picnic area for outdoor meals as much as weather allows, transitioning from family style meals to buffet style with servers to limit unnecessarily contact, disinfecting tables and chairs before and after each meal, and running all dishware through our washing/sanitizing process an extra time.

We received a Thrivent Action Team grant to assist in building three exterior handwashing stations and hand sanitizer dispensers in Christ Lodge and other buildings on site.

Sky Ranch will continue to update its procedures and processes based on recommendations from Larimer County Department of Health and Environment, the State of Colorado, the CDC, and the American Camping Association.

You don't need a lot to leave your legacy at Sky Ranch!

By using Tithely, our online giving platform, you can set up a recurring donation for an amount that works for you.

\$5 a month helps us purchase new programming supplies—high ropes gear, arts & crafts supplies, and more!

\$10 a month provides funding to start up our greenhouse and gardens for the summer

\$20 a month allows us to pay a summer staff for a week

\$40 a month allows a child to attend camp on a full campership

#### Visit:

skyranchcolorado.org/donate-today to set up your recurring donation!



## Wish List

- Dependable Car or Minivan
- Laminate Flooring for Cabins
- Embroidery Floss/Thread
- Crayola Markers (non-toxic)
- Wenger Music Stands
- · Go Pro Camera (Call for info)
- 360' Camera
- Guitars
- Clavinova with MIDI

#### Kitchen

- Industrial Food Processor
- Heavy Duty Kitchen Hand Mixer
- Commercial Chef Knives Set

#### **Property**

- Cadet Wall Heaters (call for info)
- Snow Mobile
- 2 seat Gator Utility Vehicle
- Construction Paper (assorted colors)
   Bobcat with a Backhoe Attachment
  - 2 Queen Mattresses for Lodge
  - 10 Twin Mattresses for Christ Lodge
  - 8' White Rectangle Plastic Tables
  - Garden Supplies
  - Standing Jig Saw

#### Office

- Postage Stamps
- Marker/Highlighters
- Lockable & Waterproof Shed

### **Anderson Legacy Gift**

By Gail Anderson Werth

1965 was the first summer I lived at Sky Ranch. I was 8 years old. The pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church persuaded my father, Richard Anderson, to be the camp director. My parents accepted. Here are some of my memories.

Our family of five lived in the director's cabin. There was a kitchen and a bathroom but no running water. mother, Eleanor, remembered the lack of water as the single most stressful thing about raising kids in the mountains. I remember that as kids we pretty much had the run of the place. Greg and I rode our bikes down thru the meadow and back; we collected toads from the marsh and left them to roast in the hot sun outside the cabin. Our cat (why did we bring the cat?) ran away and then two or three weeks later The Cat Came Back! My siblings and I competed for the attentions of our favorite camp counselors. Everybody wanted to hang with Sonia, if I remember correctly. I "helped" Odelia Blehm in the kitchen. She let me organize the little cereal boxes. If you were in the old lodge first in the morning sometimes you got to ring the bell for breakfast.

There was a giant wooden icebox ( it covered a whole wall) back in the kitchen. There was a lot of cabin building that summer. I remember the smell of the oil based brown stain on the nurse's cabin and the turpentine used to clean it off my hands. Dad worked on a project to pipe water down from Beaver Falls. There were floods that summer in Colorado; the bridge at the Tom Bennet campground connecting us to the outside world was washed away. We were stranded! It was so exciting, but then the county came up and rebuilt it by the end of the week.

My parents were lifelong supporters of Sky Ranch. All three of us siblings went to camp every summer that we were able. Janet and I each had a summer as a ranch hand. I returned many years later to be a weekend cook with my three kids. They have their own sets of Sky Ranch memories.

Both of my parents have passed away now and my siblings and I were pleased to honor their wishes to give a legacy gift to Sky Ranch. We are glad, in these uncertain times, to support the ongoing, life changing work that happens in that wonderful place.

We are thankful for the life and leadership of Richard Anderson. As one of the early directors of Sky Ranch, he helped create the foundations upon which the camp was started. We are thankful that in his estate plan, he and his family continued that legacy by leaving a gift to the Sky Ranch General Endowment Fund, ensuring the future of this ministry for generations to come. How about you? What will your legacy be? Sky Ranch is a partner with the ELCA Foundation and has access to the services of an ELCA gift planner for free. Contact the camp for more information.



Your gift
will ensure that
generations of
campers, guests, and
staff can
encounter Christ
on the
mountaintops

## Peace Works: 2020 Bible Study

Peace is a prayer for some and a life's work for others. It's a blessing we share with others and a longing within each of our hearts. Scripture is filled with the stories of peace and justice and camp is the perfect place to share them. Peace isn't always easy, but it's always worth the effort, because we know that peace works!

Along with daily scriptures *Peace Works* includes themes that explore peace from a variety of cultural, historical, and theological perspectives. These daily theme words hold deep meaning and invite us to see the world through someone else's eyes.

**Sunday** - We welcome campers in the hospitable spirit of *aloha* and invites them to find their place at the table of the parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24).

**Summer Offering** 

Dear friends of Sky Ranch and Mobile Laundry,

We are very grateful for your past support and continued interest in helping kids and families get clean clothes. While our efforts have been a bit curtailed during the Covid-19 outbreak, we have partnered with a local laundry in Loveland and implemented additional hygiene measures to make sure we have continued, although limited service in Fort Collins. Hopefully, Mobile Laundry will be back to full operations in our communities by this summer or fall.

We did have a memorable first year. We started doing so many loads of laundry at one of our schools that our power system failed and we had to install a new generator (\$15,000). It got so cold this winter that all our pipes froze and we couldn't get the machines to operate. A local auto repair shop offered to store

**Monday** - Then we celebrate our covenantal community by exploring *ubuntu* and what it means to be part of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:1-27).

**Tuesday** - As the community grows closer, we will name the reality of conflict, as stories of Jacob and Esau remind us of our ability to contribute both to conflict and peacemaking (Genesis 27:1-26). *Shalom* calls us out of conflict, to find peace with God and each other.

Wednesday - Jesus shows us what God's *agape* love looks like and how it reconciles us to God, even when we are unaware or do not fully understand. We try to model the vulnerable love and humble service of Jesus, demonstrated in washing the disciples' feet (John:1-17), as we seek peace with others. Balancing our love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self is not easy, but it is at the core of Christian living.

our truck in their heated garage on cold nights and problem solved. The honor society at a Fort Collins junior high school took a tour of the truck and decided to make us their community support project, and we were even featured in a front page article of the Fort Collins Coloradoan newspaper. Folks, both young and old, have been vital in our efforts to keep the machines running and providing dignity and respect through the simple act of washing, drying and folding clothes for families in need.



**Thursday** - As we strive to live in harmony, the Good Samaritan's story (Luke 10:25-29) reminds us that brokenness is real, and that there is work to be done by all God's people. We are called to work together, with our God-given potential to change the world. Sometimes we doubt the difference we are making, and the cry of **sí se puede** (yes, we can) reminds us of our full potential as people of God.

**Friday** - As we leave camp, we revisit the concept of *aloha*, and receive Jesus' benediction and promise of peace that will remain with us always (John 14:25-27). We remember that the same Spirit that welcomed us, has dwelt with us, and now sends and accompanies us in our peace works at home.

#### Want to help?

Money, of course, is always helpful. We are an all-volunteer program, but still have to buy gas, propane and maintain our truck and machines. We can also use laundry soap (liquid high efficiency – no pods), 13-gallon plastic bags, disinfectant wipes, and gloves (when they become available), Swiffer wet wipes, etc.

To donate money, go to

HomewardAlliance.org/MobileLaundry/

To donate supplies, contact Woody or Pat by email at <a href="Laundry@HomewardAlliance.org">Laundry@HomewardAlliance.org</a>

#### From a Sky Ranch Camper

By Macy Mailander

Throughout my faith journey, it is easy to say that Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp has been a big part of my life-for the past five years. I have encountered God there, in so many ways. It is a place where some of my favorite memories have been built and some of my strongest friendships have been made. This past summer I was fortunate enough to take part in the BOLD For me, being there was a way to be a Leadership Program, where I was able to part of something bigger than myself. It YouthGO-a two week program held at people. I also took part in other many Activities in YouthGO fun Sky Ranch.

faith. One of these activities included However, it was not just the activities volunteering Harvest recovery center for troubled adults has more to do with the people that I looking for ways to restart their lives. At have met. Camp would not be the same Harvest Farm I was able to work with if it didn't have such awesome people and interact with so many animals. I was there to devote their time. My camp especially fond of Belle, a six week old counselors have given me some of the billy goat, that used to follow one of the best experiences. Whether it was late residents around.

meet some amazing people. Being in the was a way to help others and truly see BOLD program enabled me to attend God's work in the hands of loving faith fulfilling

allowed me to continue to build my backpacking and white water rafting. Farms-a that have made camp so great for me. It night devotionals or some very intense Gaga Ball matches!! When I think of camp-I ALWAYS smile! In describing my all around experience at Sky Ranch, there is NO place that I would rather spend my summer, than on a mountain top, worshiping Jesus Christ, with some of my closest friends and family!

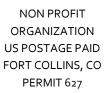




#### From a 2020 Summer Staff

By Maggie Neiberger

The first time I stepped foot into Sky Ranch was family camp weekend with my congregation when I was five years old. Two years later I was able to go up the mountain without my parents as a Round-Up camper. I was so nervous that I cried when my parents dropped me off, but by the time my parents came back, I was trying to find places in the lodge where I could hide and stay longer. When I was in middle school, I was very confident that I had mastered every low rope there was. That year, despite my stubbornness, I learned to listen and be open to new ways to complete the challenges. When I started high school, camp became a place where I could ask the hard questions that were weighing on my heart about my faith. I learned that I am not alone in my questioning and I grew a lot spiritually in community with new friends. After my junior year of high school I felt called to be a Staff in Training and learn more about what it means to "facilitate an encounter with Christ on the mountaintops." I loved the two summers of being an SIT where I started to learn how to walk alongside the campers in whatever part of life they were in and how to have fun, laugh, sing, and worship together. I have looked up to the counselors since I was five and this summer I will be joining them as a staff member. I am incredibly excited to strive to be like my past counselors who taught me, through both word and deed, that I am a beloved child of God who is a worthy leader, friend, listener, and encourager. I cannot wait to see what Sky Ranch still has to teach me this summer!





Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp 805 S Shields St Fort Collins, CO 80521 970.493.5258

