

Winter 2007/2008

“If You Give, You Begin to Live”

The Year in Review: Message from the Executive Director

*To change the world, start with one step.
However small, the first step is hardest of all.
Once you get your gait, you'll be walking tall.
If you give, you begin to live.*
— Dave Matthews

On behalf of all of us at Reel Recovery, I want to express our deep gratitude for another remarkable year serving men with cancer. We have just completed another successful and meaningful Retreat season: from May 1 to November 1, we conducted fifteen Retreats in eleven states, serving close to 180 men with cancer. We added a new state this year, Pennsylvania, and additional retreats in Utah and Colorado. In our four years as an organization, we have now conducted 43 Retreats serving close to 500 men.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 15, 2008
2008 Retreat Schedule posted online

February 7, 2008
Annual Patrons Dinner, Denver

March 20, 2008
Wine-tasting & Auction, Salt Lake City

May 2008
Retreat Season begins

August 2008
Hunting Down Cancer Online Auction

We are very proud of these accomplishments, as they speak loudly of the tremendous dedication of the hundreds of volunteers across the country who have made this success possible.

“If you give, you begin to live. . .”

A simple line from a Dave Matthews song, but such a powerful ethos, one that guides all we do at Reel Recovery and that permeates the entire Reel Recovery community. We are continually amazed and deeply moved by the spirit of generosity that embraces us as we do this work. It emanates from so many places in so many forms: from the caring oncology nurse who shares information about Reel Recovery to give hope to a newly diagnosed patient as he gets his first infusion; from the past participant who, three years after attending a Retreat, sends in a contribution of \$15 because he is finally out from under his mountain of medical bills; from the volunteer who, after helping at a Retreat, now takes his dog into hospitals to comfort kids with cancer; from Nevada participant George, 45 years old with stage 4 liver cancer, who told us that cancer had given him “the gift of life”, and that for the rest of his days, he was fully devoting himself to giving love and attention



Reel Recovery co-founders Jim Cloud and Coy Theobalt with E.D. Stan Golub

to his young family; from Washington participant Don (page 3), who was given an outstretched hand by his Fishing Buddy on the river, and now wants to stretch out his hand to others in need, all while dealing with a severe bout of tongue cancer.

In this Newsletter, we have featured the stories of just a few of the many people who have touched our lives with their spirit of giving. They, like so many others in the Reel Recovery community, have taken that one step to change the world: to give. We are so grateful to them, and to all of you, for your generosity and support.

Be Well! Fish On!

Stan Golub
Executive Director

WISH LIST

- 4 pc, 5 wt. Fly Rods and Reels
- 14 Wading Staffs – collapsible
- Waterproof Digital Camera
- Flies, flies and more flies (5,000+)
- Frequent Flyer Miles
- Auction Items

FACILITIES

If you have a chance to visit any of our Retreat hosting facilities, please tell them you're a friend of Reel Recovery. They are all exceptional places, very generous to Reel Recovery and hospitable and caring to all their guests.

California:

Clearwater Lodge on the Pit River

Colorado:

- Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch
- 4UR Ranch
- Taylor Creek Cabins

Kentucky/Indiana:

Wooded Glen

Michigan:

Gates Au Sable Lodge

Montana:

Dome Mountain Ranch

Nevada (Markleeville, CA):

- Creekside Lodge
- Pleasant Valley Fly Fishing Preserve

New York:

Beaverkill Valley Inn

Oregon:

Big K Ranch

Pennsylvania:

Allenberry Resort

Utah:

Falcon's Ledge

Washington:

The Inn at Suncadia

Taking the Step: Reel Recovery Volunteer Spotlight

“Your greatest gift is what you give of yourself.” Stewart Brown, whose inspiration continues to serve as the basis of Reel Recovery’s mission, made this comment at our first-ever Retreat in 2003.

Rob and Cheryl Bachman are two people who indeed give of themselves, making it possible for Reel Recovery to provide a consistent and rewarding experience for our Retreat participants. After attending our Loveland, Colorado Retreat in May, 2006, Rob, a Hodgkin’s lymphoma survivor, stated emphatically that he would “spend the rest of my life repaying Reel Recovery for the difference they have made in my life.” His skills and commitment were soon put to use as he assumed the role of Reel Recovery’s Equipment Manager.

Rob’s background, willingness to get his hands dirty, and ability to work magic with logistics, make him a perfect fit for this job, a function critical to the success of each Retreat.

And Rob’s wife, Cheryl, is by his side every step of the way, just as she has been throughout his two year battle with cancer. The two of them now enjoy fishing together, tying flies, building rods, and day-dreaming about being on the stream, all signs of hopeless “fishhead” addiction.

Rob and Cheryl flawlessly managed the gear for each of the 15 Retreats completed this year. For this, and so much more, we offer our sincere gratitude.



Volunteers Rob & Cheryl Bachman



Indomitable Jerry

“I discovered that while fly-fishing, I was in another place. In this place there was no cancer, no pain and no fear.”

Jerry Crum

A ten-year mantle cell lymphoma survivor, Jerry Crum has been an inspiration to the Reel Recovery staff since the first days of the organization. A tireless advocate for cancer research and survivor support,

Jerry helped launch our Retreats in Nevada and California in 2004 and was instrumental in establishing our grass roots support throughout the region. His strong ties to both the cancer and fly-fishing communities have allowed us to build substantial, long-term partnerships with local organizations such as the Carson-Tahoe Cancer Center and High Sierra Flycasters, and our base of support in this region has grown exponentially from his initial efforts.

Jerry has been a Retreat participant, Fishing Buddy, fundraiser, recruiter and all-around cheerleader for Reel Recovery, but most of all, he has been a beacon of courage and strength; his indomitable spirit, irrepressible humor and unflappable sense of hope, all in the face of a relentless cancer battle, provide a constant source of inspiration to those of us privileged to know him.



Jerry and E.D. Stan Golub

Sharing Their Stories . . .

“This was one of the most beautiful settings one can imagine. The meals, the gear and the lodging were all free. If I were writing a MasterCard advertisement I would add, ‘the counselors and guides: priceless.’

There were nine of us participants; I saw great differences in education, politics, religions and more, but we hardly noticed these differences. We focused on what we had in common: We all ‘got it.’ We got that life is short; we got that rich, or poor, PhD’s or cowboys, the feelings are the same. We got that some of the men who had been through the program previously and signed their names to fishing vests, were gone. We got that there is horror and there is hope.

A program like Reel Recovery is needed because most men seem to keep their emotional needs, their fear, and their bravery locked inside. I am not a social person and it’s hard for me to ‘spill my guts’ to anyone, much less to strangers. But the program was much more than I expected and you could share or not share, depending on your mood or the topic. We talked and we fished. Some of the men had been through hell compared to what I have gone through, and others had it easier. I am not sure if luck will stay with me; none of us know.

Most of what I felt from being at the retreat was a great respect. Respect for the men who drove hundreds of miles to share their skills with strangers, and a very great respect for what some of the men shared about their lives and their experiences with cancer. We met as strangers and left as brothers, and I don’t say that lightly. There will be more programs next year and if you are a man with cancer or a survivor, or if you know someone who is, put them in touch with Reel Recovery – if they are lucky, they might catch a fish, but for sure they will find much more than that.”

Steve D., California 2007



Steve D. at Closing Ceremony



Closing Circle, Pennsylvania 2007

I was hit by the prostate cancer train three years ago and have been dragged under it all this time. Reel Recovery taught me to get out from it’s grasp and get back on my feet and face my fears. I learned to let others, who have been there, into my life to help me understand the real meaning of having cancer and how to deal with it. Who knows how long I would have been stuck in my world of private suffering if it weren’t for the staff and participants of my Reel Recovery Retreat. God bless you all.

P. Sansone, Washington 2007

On May 15th I received a biopsy report of “malignant squamous cell carcinoma” on a tumor in my tongue. I underwent a 6 hour surgery, then 30 radiation treatments and 6 weekly infusions of chemo followed. One afternoon in early October, I received a call from our Moses Lake Cancer Foundation, asking me if I’d like to attend a fly fishing retreat for men recovering from cancer. What an answer to prayer! The retreat was a phenomenal experience for me. During the 3-day retreat, I had an awesome opportunity to listen to other men share what’s in their hearts and on their minds



Don W. and Fishing Buddy Scott

during Reel Recovery’s “Courageous Conversations.” I also learned some new fishing techniques but, most importantly, I learned a life lesson that I’ll never forget! While my fishing buddy and I were wading across the Yakima River, he reached out and offered his hand to help me keep balance. I declined saying that I thought I was doing okay. He asked a second time, and added, “Don, please allow me to be your walking stick.” Many times while fishing, I’ve found it necessary to use a walking stick. Walking sticks give me support, keep me upright, hold me up and help me not to stumble or fall. On that overcast but nice day, in a river in central Washington, my Buddy, Scott, was necessary for me! I reached out, took a hold of his hand and received his gift. Because of this experience, I am now willing and feel able to reach out to others who are going through a difficult time and be their needed walking stick. I pledge to do whatever I can to further the cause of Reel Recovery, for it in itself, is a walking stick for men with cancer.

Don West, Washington 2007

News of Note . . .

NPR Features Reel Recovery

In August, 2007, we were delighted to share our Montana Retreat with Gary Waleik, senior producer of National Public Radio's "Only a Game" radio show. Gary participated in all aspects of the Retreat and recorded much of it, from our Courageous Conversations to the Signing of the Vests ceremony, to the on-the-water action on the Yellowstone River and finally, our Closing Ceremony. He sat with a number of staff, volunteers and participants and graciously evoked their thoughts and feelings about the Retreat experience. All of this came together in an outstanding and powerful 12-minute story that "Only a Game" aired nationally on NPR in September,

and was aired again on NPR's "Here and Now" in October. Gary has beautifully captured the essence of what Reel Recovery is all about, and we invite you to listen to the program on Reel Recovery's website.

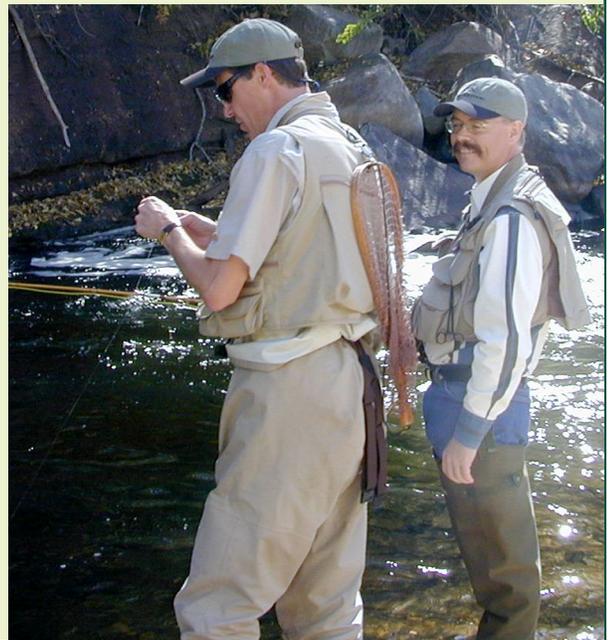


NPR's Gary Waleik (r.) records vest signing ceremony

In Honor of our "Posterboy"

Anthony Jensen was a participant at our second-ever Reel Recovery Retreat, held in Loveland, CO in October of 2003. Those of us who were there can still vividly remember how Anthony, only an hour into the Retreat, tearfully described his 8-year battle with thymoma cancer, and how, despite his grim prognosis, he was determined to continue to provide for his extended family, and hoped to see his daughter's graduation from high school. At that moment, Anthony's deep courage and emotional honesty galvanized the group, and affirmed to us, at that early stage of the program, the transformative power of the Courageous Conversation process. After the Retreat, Anthony's wife Eva teased him that he was the "posterboy" for Reel Recovery, and indeed he literally was, with his picture gracing both the front and back of our national brochure and on our marketing posters. Anthony lost his battle this October, just 4 days short of his 46th birthday. He will be fondly remembered by all of us at Reel Recovery.

Anthony (r.) with Fishing Buddy Jim



How You Can Give . . .

MissionFish. Our new partnership with *MissionFish* makes it possible for you to buy or sell items on eBay and have the proceeds benefit Reel Recovery. Call us for details or visit www.missionfish.org.

Hunting Down Cancer. In August 2008, their month-long online auction will benefit Reel Recovery. Visit www.huntingdowncancer.org for great gear and trips.

Year-End Giving. Help yourself at tax time while helping men with cancer now! Reel Recovery is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization so your 2007 donations are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by the IRS.

Matching Gifts. Ask your employer about matching your contribution.

Scholarships. Help support a specific Retreat by giving a \$700 scholarship that will fully pay the way for a participant at the Retreat you specify.

Legacy Gifts. Give a lasting gift by naming Reel Recovery as a beneficiary in your estate planning. Call us for more details.

Volunteer. Check our website or call for more information.

