

Winter/Spring 2022

We're Back!

Message from the Executive Director

November 3, 2019. The last day of our 2019 Retreat Season, our best ever. 32 Retreats in 21 States and New Zealand, looking forward to an even better 2020, with expansion to Australia, 35 domestic Retreats, and on target to serve our 4,000th man. We were feeling great about the present and future of Reel Recovery.

We all know what happened next.

Fast forward to May, 2021. John Billings and his Australia Team find a gap between lockdowns and are able to conduct our first-ever OZ Retreat. What a shot in the arm, hearing the impact Reel Recovery had on the men down under! Like Allan, who was ready to give up his cancer battle, but then regained hope at the Retreat, and reminded us all why we do what we do, and were so very eager to resume our Retreats here in the States. But our wait continued for safer conditions, and we couldn't conduct our usual Spring and Summer Retreats.

September 1, 2021. We're back in business! After almost two years, Washington



"Today" in Virginia

State kicks off our domestic schedule. With vaccines now widely available, we were able to resume our Retreats with new safety protocols in place, including full vaccinations required for all participants, staff and volunteers, single rooms only for the participants, and masking and distancing where needed.

September and October were a whirlwind, with 15 Retreats in 12 States in just 8 weeks. Shiloh and Debbie worked overtime to make sure every Retreat was primed and ready. And they were! Over 100 men served flawlessly and safely and meaningfully. Once again changing lives, like Todd's, who was able to replace his indescribable stress with great memories of fishing; and Matt, who for the first time was able to talk with men about the

unique challenges of being a man with breast cancer; and Craig, who formed life-time bonds of friendship, deeply moved by the generosity and kindness he experienced. It's hard to describe how good it felt to be back serving these men again.

October 12, 2021, our last Retreat of the year, in Syria, Virginia. And we have some special guests: a crew from "The Today Show" to shoot a segment featuring Reel Recovery. What a surreal book-end to the year. From the anxiety and uncertainty of whether we'd ever be able to have Retreats again, to our best press coverage ever, with Al Roker extolling Reel Recovery as "one of the most amazing ideas I've ever heard."

When I see what we accomplished over the past few months, and what we are looking forward to in 2022 (a full season of 30+ Retreats, plus expansion to Iceland), and when I think of the dedication and resolve of our 700+ Volunteers during such a challenging time, I have to agree with Al. Reel Recovery is truly amazing.

Be Well! Fish On!

Stan Golub, Executive Director



Australia Joy!

Host Facilities

These are the wonderful facilities that hosted our Retreats in 2021 or will in 2022. It has been a challenging time for all of them, but they open their hearts to us and keep our participants safe. If you have a chance, please visit and say you're a friend of Reel Recovery!

ARKANSAS

Cedarwood Lodge—*Flippin*

AUSTRALIA

2021: Bairnsdale Lodge—*Omeo VC*

2022: Millbrooke Lakes—*Gordon VC*

CALIFORNIA/NEVADA:

Hunewill Guest Ranch—*Bridgeport*

COLORADO

Bar Lazy J Ranch—*Kremmling*

North Fork Ranch—*Shawnee*

IDAHO

Wild Horse Creek Ranch—*Mackay*

LOUISIANA

White Lake Lodge—*Vermilion Parish*

KENTUCKY/INDIANA

Cumberland Lake—*Jamestown*

MAINE

Weatherby's—*Grand Lake Stream*

MICHIGAN

Ranch Rudolf—*Traverse City*

MISSOURI

Westover Farms—*Steelville*

MONTANA

Dome Mountain Ranch—*Emigrant*

NEW JERSEY

Inn at Millrace Pond—*Hope*

NEW ZEALAND

MiCamp—*Ruapahu*

NORTH CAROLINA

Springmaid Mountain—*Spruce Pines*

OHIO

Rockwell Springs Trout Club—*Clyde*

OREGON

Big K Ranch—*Elkton*

PENNSYLVANIA

Allenberry Resort—*Boiling Springs*

TEXAS

Arrowhead Camp—*Glen Rose*

Camp Allen—*Navasota*

Camp Capers—*Waring*

UTAH

Falcon's Ledge—*Altamont*

White's Ranch—*Paradise*

VIRGINIA

Graves Mountain Lodge—*Syria*

Rose River Farm—*Syria*

WASHINGTON

Mountain Springs—*Leavenworth*

Transitions... A Tribute

After putting her heart and soul into Reel Recovery for the past 13 years, our Program Director, Debbie McKinney, is stepping away at the end of 2021, to finally take some time for herself to rest and relax and enjoy. It's a bittersweet departure for all of us who have had the overwhelming pleasure of working with Debbie to build Reel Recovery into the wonderful organization it is today. No one has put more effort, more care and more dedication into Reel Recovery, and we will sorely miss her enthusiasm, delightful sense of humor and irrepressible positive outlook. Most of all, her departure will leave a deep hole where her heartfelt care and love for our participants, our volunteers and our partners has always filled the Reel Recovery world.

Debbie joined us with her life partner Warren Wolf, after Warren attended a Colorado Retreat in 2007. He and Debbie were determined to bring Reel Recovery back home to Texas, and they made that a reality the very next year in the Texas Hill Country. Warren Coordinated, while Debbie offered professional chair massages to weary participants after a day on the water.

They also took over national management of our gear, and Debbie has flawlessly maintained our growing inventory and expanded shipping needs ever since.

Warren became a member of our Board, and he and Debbie continued to build the Texas Program, until Warren succumbed to his melanoma in 2011.

Shortly thereafter, Debbie became our first full-time hire, and then Program Director a few years later. In those 10 years, she has overseen the growth of our Retreat Program: expansion into 21 states and globally, working with 60+ State Coordinators, while expertly managing our supply partners and ever-expanding inventory of gear. To say she has been invaluable would be a gross understatement.

Debbie has experienced painful personal loss during her time with Reel Recovery, but she has never lost her resolve to help our men, and her empathy has only deepened for them and their families as they go through their own struggles. Her heart is boundless, and everyone in the Reel Recovery community is better for knowing her. She has been the best colleague, and friend, imaginable, and her legacy of helping thousands of men will last forever. Thank you Debbie, and godspeed in your next adventure!



Sharing Their Stories....



Len (r) at Closing Circle

"You changed my Dad's life and mine. He died just shortly after being at the retreat; but he found lifelong friends there, quite literally. I remember one young man leaning over and whispering in my Dad's ear, "I'll see you soon." Heartbreaking but real and comforting! He found hope and peace in the last days of his life. This is the greatest gift you can give! There are only small moments I remember at my Dad's funeral; but I remember you all being there for us and I remember your visit to our home just before he died. My love and prayers go out to you all and to all those you support. Be Well! Fish On!"

Pam Martien, daughter of Len, Colorado Participant.

"I've talked one-on-one with guys about prostate cancer, but the idea of a group to be able to sit there and share, is really to me one of the most amazing ideas I've ever heard."

Al Roker, Nov. 15th, The Today Show 3rd Hour



BROTHERHOOD: MEN FIND BOND THROUGH FLY FISHING



Allan (r) and Buddy Ian

"I had given up, and wanted the cancer to take me. This experience has been life changing and I don't want to be isolated anymore. I have rediscovered myself through fly-fishing and want to keep going."

Allan, 2021 Australia Participant

"I just wanted to thank you again for the incredible opportunity to participate in Ohio's Reel Recovery retreat in September. Words can't express how deeply appreciative I am of your kindness. From start to finish this was truly a life-changing event that I will cherish for the rest of my life! I will be forever bonded to you, my fellow participants, the staff, and all of the buddies. Thank you all for your incredible generosity and kindness! You should all be extremely proud of the huge impact you have had on our lives! Be Well! Fish On!"

Craig, 2021 Ohio participant



Craig (l) and Buddy Burton



Todd (center) and his Kentucky Retreat brothers

"I'm a seven year active cancer patient of stage 4 metastatic squamous cell. The stress that comes with my ongoing battle is indescribable. It's hard to find a moment during any given day that doesn't consume me of my disease. This program gave me a chance to forget about my battle and enjoy life. Not only did I forget but I had a chance to reverse the process and talk about my battle and release pent up thoughts and emotions. When you meet others who truly understand what you endure daily is amazing. Spending the days fly fishing and the evenings in group discussion is perfect therapy. This experience has helped me regain my strength and direction for my future. I truly thank you for the opportunity to go on this retreat. I will always remember this experience and now have great memories about fishing that take the place of thoughts of cancer!"

Todd, 2021 Kentucky participant



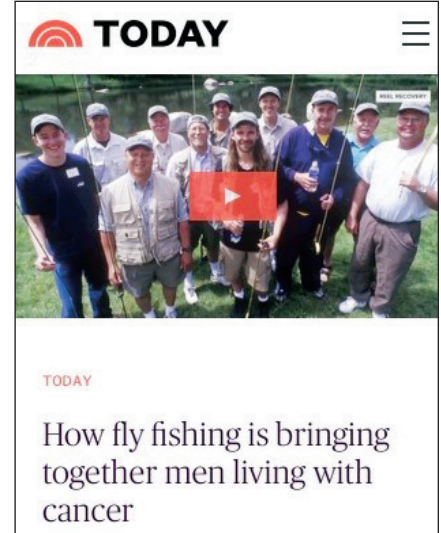
Generous Support in 2021

We thank these major sponsors, and hundreds of other individuals and organizations who have supported Reel Recovery in 2021. In these challenging times, we cannot understate our gratitude and appreciation for the financial support we continue to receive. These generous contributors have been vital to our sustainability during COVID; please consider joining them as we prepare for a full season of Retreats in 2022.

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AI Roker Loves Us!

In case you missed it, on November 15th, Reel Recovery was featured on *The Today Show 3rd Hour* with a beautiful 5-minute segment, shot at our October Virginia Retreat. It was by far the best national exposure we've had, and the response has been nothing but positive. If you want to watch, and share with your friends, the link is on our website at: <https://reelrecovery.org/al-roker-loves-reel-recovery>.



Onward to Iceland

We're adding to our global reach! Along with Programs in New Zealand and Australia, we'll be launching in Iceland in the summer of 2022. Our new Iceland Coordinator, Isak Vilhjalmsson cold-called us in August and is now running fast with the ball: he's created an organizing team, built relationships in the healthcare and flyfishing arenas, and has all his Fishing Buddies ready to go! We're excited to be stretching our reach from the South Pacific to North Atlantic, about as far as you can go around the globe!



Help us Thrive!

2021 has been a year of rebuilding, for Reel Recovery and so many other non-profits and small businesses. Times are still uncertain, but we are firmly resolved and dedicated to continuing our programs safely in 2022, serving more men who need our healing Retreats. Every dollar is important, so please join us today so we can continue this good work together. Use the form below or donate online at reelrecovery.org/year-end-giving-campaign.

Please Give Us A Hand!

DONATION FORM

- \$75 Please send me the Reel Recovery Mesh Cap
- \$150 Please send me a Reel Recovery Long-Sleeve T-shirt *Circle size below*
Unisex Size: S M L XL XXL XXXL
- \$350 Please send me a Reel Recovery/Orvis "Open-Air Caster" Fly-Fishing Shirt *Circle size below*
Men's Size: S M L XL XXL
- \$700 Please send me a Reel Recovery/Orvis "Recycled Drift Vest" *Circle Size below*
Men's Size: M L XL XXL
- Here's my gift of \$_____. No premium, thanks.

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