



The mission of Marble Retreat is to help bring healing, hope and restoration to those in vocational Christian ministry and the Church at large through Christ-centered brief intensive counseling.

Summer Edition 2011 • Providing Care since 1974 • Marble, Colorado

HIGH IN COLD, THIN AIR

By William Mangrum

It is cold. The indoor/outdoor thermometer on the wall by the kitchen digitally registers fifty-four degrees inside this drafty cabin. Outside is minus eight. "I'll wait," I mutter to no one but myself and go back to reading in a corner by the darkened fireplace. The other house guests are still asleep. I alone am up before the dawn. I cover my legs with a heavy, worn, crocheted blanket. It is yellowish-brown and smells. I lift my second cup of coffee and slowly turn crisp pages of a new book I'm hurrying to finish.

In another hour I'm done with Haruki Murakami's *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running: A Memoir*. Though Murakami is new to me, I learn from the dust jacket that he is an accomplished writer with an international following - twelve novels translated into forty-two languages - and numerous literary awards. I make a note to order *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *A Wild Sheep Chase* when I return home. Then I sit sipping, thinking, musing.

This slim hardback was worth the price, I judge. Murakami's story of running and writing and pressing on against every physical pain and all life's disappointments is good advice written well. His minimalist style pleases me, and inspires me to run. Satisfied, I go for more coffee. Walking into the kitchen, I glance at the wall thermometer. Whatever courage-through-reading I gained early this morning from Murakami's accounts of finishing numerous marathons in pain and enduring triathlons in freezing rain, is now lost by two degrees to the arctic mass settling down on the mountain. Outside it is minus ten.

It is cold and getting colder. I abandon my coffee quest and head toward the front door. I tug on my aged shoes, double knot the laces, swallow several ounces of warm tap water, open the door, and crunch off the low porch unto the frozen path. Starting up the unplowed drive, an icy snow still falls.

It seems to me everything at this altitude is thin and I am growing thinner. I've donned thin leg tights against the sub-zero temperatures. I've pulled a thin mask over my head, nose, and mouth leaving only a slit for my eyes. Yet in just a few minutes outside, the sub-zero air ices my lashes and my vision narrows even more. At this latitude (39-04'20" N), light is thin at six-thirty in the morning. And the road I'm trying to follow in this poor light - appropriately named "Serpentine" - is just a thin path carved on a mountainside above a frozen marble quarry.

I've only brought half-socks with me this week and now I am laced into light shoes with little tread - and it is very, very cold. Running up here will not be easy, I think. Surely Murakami would be proud of me for so quickly putting his words into action. I am 8,600 feet high in the Rocky Mountains and breathing heavy in the thin, freezing air. And though I am running, I am running on ice.

I manage several miles up and down the mountain this first morning. I go out again in the late afternoon. I am out early again the second day and that same late afternoon and again the third morning and afternoon following. For seven, no eight days, I run morning and evening in this weather.

There is no past which cannot be mined for hope.

There are clear seasons at these elevations and this is deep winter. I am here in this tiny place with a small group of strangers. We are eight - four married couples each with painful stories of disappointment and dislocation. No matter that the fire will soon roar (daily) with fir split, dried, and stacked just outside the backdoor. We share carrying in wood, feeding the

continued on page 2

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HIGH IN COLD, THIN AIR *Continued*

flames on three hearths on three levels - game room (below), eating area (main), group room (above). The constant fire helps us a bit but it is still winter inside. The air we breathe together in this cabin is frosty. In truth, here we are all running, we are all running on ice.

I am here because of a hard, severe spell in my life. An arctic mass settled down on my work; the freeze lingered for many months, penetrating my soul. A bitter wind blew against me, disrupted my rhythms and deadened the landscape all around my home. Hoping to snap this spell of harsh weather, I came up here to run and think and read and talk - and listen to others who would understand.

Mostly what we do together for eight days in this cabin is listen. Each one has much to tell. All have much to absorb. Of course, what we hear inside our mountain sanctuary cannot be repeated outside but this is no matter. Our stories are not so rare, our hurts not so irreparable. Whatever our particular histories, whatever our specific grievances against the world, our humanity is equal. We are not so unique. Our dry skin bleeds. We labor to breathe. We bundle up. We huddle together, doing our best to get everyone through a bad winter.

For six hours a day, as a group, we tell our stories. There is silence. There is laughter. The tears flow and afterwards we eat. Following dinner, we rest, play games, and try for sleep. Some couples close their doors early, seeking to rekindle marital passions. Others share pictures by the fire and swap iTunes. Several venture out to view the herd of elk bedding down just across the footpath. One late afternoon before our meal, the Texans drive over to the hot springs near mile marker 55 along the Crystal River. They return with wild tales of naked locals and photos of big horn sheep. Always there is within our midst, this gentle mother of three who knits unceasingly. At week's end, in our final session, she surprises her new friends with new scarves.

Many read; we all speak of our families. There is no phone. There is no web connection. There is no TV.

I run - always. Early mornings and every evening, I run. I came here to listen; I came here to read; I came here to run. And what I have learned by listening and reading and running through this icy season and laughing with these strangers is this. There is no past which cannot be mined for hope. There is no hurt which cannot be bundled warm against the most severe freeze. There is no path so narrow it cannot be shared together with others.

So, seek the high, thin places where the telling is true and the listening is pure. There is wisdom to be gained - even in harsh winters. Double knot your old shoes laces and pull tight your new scarves. Go outside. Run. Where there is a collective will-to-truth, there will also be the courage-by-association necessary for running hard through bitter winds, even on ice.

And there is this too: in the end, we've only a shared life and it must sometimes be lived high in cold, thin air.

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THROUGH THE DESERT TO THE PROMISED LAND: A TIME OF JOURNEY AND TRANSITION

By Mike and Kari MacKenzie

Moses and the Israelites spent 40 years in the desert before arriving in the Promised Land. In many ways, this was a time of preparation and renewal as God taught the Israelites to depend fully on Him. While our journey is nothing compared to that of Moses and his people, we feel God has been preparing us for the ministry of Marble Retreat for many years. From previous work at a ministry care center, to returning to school for our doctorate degrees, to running our own counseling practice, God had been growing, stretching, and preparing us.

And just like the Israelites, arriving in the Promised Land; didn't mean the work was done, but just beginning. Since arriving at Marble, we have been settling in. While giving the apartment a facelift we (Kari, Mike, our two dogs and cat) have been staying with the Cappas. The apartment has gotten new paint and carpet and many other upgrades. During this time, Kari and I have been therapists for a group, have been hosts for several groups, and have attended two pastors' conferences to promote Marble. And during this time, we found out Kari is pregnant with our first child, which is very exciting!

We believe God has gone before us preparing the way. We are thrilled to be a part of the ministry of Marble Retreat – caring for the servants of God's church. We would also like to ask you to please pray for Kari, as she had surgery on her cervical spine July 18th. Please pray for a smooth recovery process during the 4-6 weeks after surgery and for protection for the baby as she goes through this time.

PRAYERS FROM THE CHILDREN

This month we were blessed to receive letters of encouragement and prayers from the 4th grade class at Carmel Christian School, one of our supporting churches.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie,

I hope you bring alot of people to Christ. Have soper great summer. I'll be praying for you to have strenght and joy to encourage others. Don't quiet doing your job that god gave you. Thank you for the work you are doing. Keep praying that God will not let you tire. Keep on encorging people that are sad.

John 14:1

"DO no let your hearts be troubled, trust in God trust also in me."

John 14:15-17^a

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the father, and he will give you anther Counsler to be with you forever - the Holy Spirit of truth.

Praying for you,

Lucas

Dear Mike and Kari McKenzie,

Thank you sooooo much for all you do for the world. You are like Barnabus, whos name means encouraging. It makes me really happy to hear that you are encouraging discouraged people. One day I'd like to be an encouraging missionary in Africa. I've always wanted to go to Africa like my mom. Now, thanks to you, I want just go to Africa for the sights, but to encourage people.

Thank's,
Conora

Dear Mike and Kari McKenzie, thank you so much for what you do, you will always be in my prayers. God has blessed you with a special talent to help others.

And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

Your friend,
Grace

P.S. I hope you remember all of us appreciate you alot.

BOARD COMINGS AND GOINGS

We are pleased to welcome Lisa Rue, Ph.D. to our Board of Directors. Lisa has a degree in Educational Leadership and is a certified health educator with 23 years of experience in public education. During her tenure in public education she taught health and sexuality education. She founded the FRIENDS FIRST organization in 1993 and spent 12 years working for the educational non-profit agency where she conducted grant writing and program development raising a 1.2 million dollar annual budget. Currently, Lisa is continuing her research interest in health education and evaluation research as an Assistant Professor in the Applied Statistics and Research Methods program in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Northern Colorado. Lisa and her husband, Bob, have also been guest hosting some of our groups this summer as Mike and Kari travel and recuperate. They are both wonderful cooks and Bob is an expert house painter when he isn't teaching physical education in Longmont. We are blessed to have this most gifted couple as part of the ministry.

We sadly say good-bye to David Wilson. He has been a wonderful encouragement on the board. He continues in his interest and prayer support of the ministry. Thank you David!



NEWS FROM MELISSA

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing... Col 1:6 (NIV). As I read this verse, the picture in my mind was of a trolley car, like in San Francisco, and I wanted to run, catch up and jump on. A lot of this work is being done by and through women missionaries. They can have access to a part of the population that men don't. And they, like most of you, are called to a specific place to do a particular job. Being a woman, wife, mother, whatever, is pretty much the same anywhere, but the living situation may be very different. It is a privilege to get in on what they do. I have been working with Women of the Harvest as one of their volunteer counselors for two years. My fourth trip will be in October to Brazil. I also am called and my calling is to help, encourage and love His special workers. So I am very grateful that I have the opportunity to jump on the trolley and be a part of what has been going on *All over the world*.

Women of the Harvest has a website: womenoftheharvest.com. They have an email called 30 Days of Prayer. When you sign up to receive the email, you will be directed to pray for specific attendees, volunteers, activities, etc. I would love to know that you are praying for us - for our safety, for my energy level to be able to keep up with all these young gals, for wisdom and insight in the counseling sessions. *All over the world* means that we can be connected world wide in the exciting "bearing fruit and growing" of the gospel.

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MATCHING GRANT: DOUBLE YOUR DONATION

Marble Retreat has been the blessed recipient of a \$20,000 matching grant for our scholarship fund. Only gifts from new donors will be matched. If you have ever considered giving to Marble Retreat, now is a very good time to do so. Any donation you give to the scholarship fund will be matched by the donor of the grant -- doubling your gift. The scholarship fund is used for each and every group, and helps those in financial need attend Marble Retreat. It is a much needed resource to those in ministry who cannot otherwise afford to come. We are very grateful to the donor of this matching grant, and encourage you to consider partnering with Marble Retreat in this way.



ALUMNI NOTES

“We love to hear about the continued work God is doing through you both! You hold such a special place in our hearts. We are doing very well and our time shared with you has played a large part in where we are now. God began and continued His different areas of refining in our lives and marriage while we were on the mountain with you. We are thankful for your continued health, Patti, and your continued love for one another, your sons and the Lord.” - 2004 Alum

*“Thanks for all you did for us, and allowing Jesus to use you all so powerfully at Marble Retreat.”
- 2011 Alum*

*“We were enriched to have group and individual assistance in identifying the real root of the problem and finding biblical solutions to bring about change. This helped us to have hope and to grow in our faith in, trust of, and relationship with God. Thanks to each one of you for your parts in having a vision for the ministry of Marble Retreat and sacrificing and investing time, talent, treasure, testimony, etc. to provide this. Thanks to those who invest in the scholarships. What an outpouring of God’s love to us and so many others!!! We look forward to one day standing at God’s throne together with all of you, praising our Savior and telling you of His continued leading and blessings in our lives as you helped us recharge for what He has ahead. We also pray for you and the ministry of Marble Retreat and others who will come there as the days go on.” **For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. Hebrews 5:10 (NAS)** - 2011 Alum*

“I Think of you all, our wonderful stay, and beautiful Colorado often. You were and are a blessing to so many. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts (and bodies, minds and spirits).” - 2008 Alum

GROUP SCHEDULE FOR 2011

July 19 - July 28
August 2 - August 11*
August 16 - August 25

August 30 - September 8
September 20 - September 29*
October 11 - October 20

October 25 - November 3
November 8 - 17
November 29 - December 8*

**Indicates group is open to all believers. All other listed groups are for clergy only.*

*Session dates are subject to change. Please call to confirm a reservation prior to booking flights.
8-day groups, when making travel plans, plan to arrive Tuesday late afternoon and depart on Thursday morning of the following week.*

A BUSY SUMMER

It has been a summer of whirlwind changes here at Marble Retreat! Our new partners in ministry, Mike and Kari MacKenzie are now, after 2 ½ months of hard labor, in their refurbished apartment in the lodge. Steve and Patti have utilized all those extra bedrooms in their house to welcome volunteers, friends, family, and Mike and Kari while their apartment was getting a radical facelift. Staff have had a lot of medical needs and lots of travel. Now, all is well and we are “all in our places with smiles on our faces,” as Steve’s mom used to sing. We are reminded that there is much to be thankful for.



The Cappa's & The Mackenzie's

We give thanks for:

A good hospital nearby
Mike and Kari's refurbished apartment
Mike and Kari's growing baby
Our sign-ups for groups
God's loving provision for the Retreat
A godly, wise and active Board of Directors
For a prayer team who prays
For volunteers!

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.*

Psalm 100:4 (NIV)

Marble Retreat is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. You have several ways to donate, on-line click the donate button, check or credit card by mail or phone.

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