

HISTORY OF RETROUVAILLE IN MONTANA

Father Ray Nyquist, in Great Falls, was very instrumental in getting Retrouvaille started in Montana. On December 10, 1996, he gathered together some folks, none of whom had made a Retrouvaille Weekend, but who he hoped would make it happen. They were couples who had experienced Marriage Encounter, who were involved in marriage preparation, or who Father Ray thought believed in healthy marriages. He brought in a Retrouvaille presenting team couple from Oregon to give a presentation on Retrouvaille. Father Ray never gave up and just gently nudged and prayed that the Holy Spirit would provide the right personalities to get us started. That is just what happened.

Dave and Joyce Schiller were transplanted here with Malmstrom Air Force Base and had the enthusiasm and leadership abilities to get Retrouvaille off the ground. Dave met with Terri Reavley, director of the Tribunal, and Bishop Anthony M. Milone. The Catholic Diocese of Great Falls-Billings gave \$4,000 seed money to start Retrouvaille of Montana with the understanding that it would be self supporting thereafter. Our first weekend was held in Great Falls in August 1997, with fifteen couples followed by a second weekend in March 1998, with 24 couples. We moved to a Billings Weekend September 29, 2000. Now we are holding our 36th weekend in Montana! We have served 564 couples thus far. Every time we hold a weekend, we remember the Schillers and the gift that they gave to us. By the way, Joyce and her friend made our beautiful quilted banners. The Schillers have moved all over the world with the Air Force. Dave has now retired as a full colonel and currently lives in Colorado. Along with Dave and Joyce, the following couples began the Retrouvaille ministry in Montana: Joe and Jane Girard, Scott and Sheila Patera, Mary and Gary Quinn, Laird and Aggie Reed, Alan and Terri Reavley, and Father Robert Noonan. They formed the nucleus of this mission and continue to be committed to Retrouvaille of Montana today; although, Girards, Pateras, and Quinns, have retired from active ministry.

Retrouvaille of the Inland Northwest, out of Spokane, Washington has mentored us almost from the start. Dave and Joanie Fister and Roy and Betty Wheeler have presented the majority of our Weekends in the beginning; we owe a huge debt of gratitude for their commitment to us and their wisdom in guiding us. For many years now, Peter and Linda Kish have been our presenters. They are very versatile in that they have written all three weekend talks plus two post talks. And, a big plus for us are their famous recruitment skills. Two of those recruits are Bill Wadman and his wife, Rose Schuster, our registration couple. Tim and Cindy Sowa are our publicity couple, and Jon and Carol Wigen and Diana & Sean Frampton have assisted us with the interviews.

With the retirement of Father Noonan, we are blessed with two recently ordained chaplains, Father Joseph Fleming and Father Doug Krings. Our history continues to grow guided by the Holy Spirit always keeping in mind the mission of Retrouvaille.

Retrouvaille is an International community of disciples committed to the continued healing of their marriages and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, share their stories, talents and gifts to promote and spread the healing ministry of Retrouvaille.