



FROM BATTLEFIELD TO BACKCOUNTRY, WE'RE ON A MISSION OF HEALING AND HOPE



CROSS THE DIVIDE

2024 IMPACT REPORT

From my family and the amazing team at Cross The Divide (CTD), I want to extend our heartfelt thanks for another incredible year. Your unwavering support—through prayers, volunteering, land access, and financial contributions—has made an eternal impact on the lives of veterans and their families.

Veterans are experiencing breakthroughs personally and in their relationships with loved ones and with God. Many are reaching out to help other veterans navigate the challenges of transitioning to civilian life, recovering from injuries, and overcoming unseen battles. While we anticipated scaling back in 2024, God had other plans—He continues to grow this mission in ways we could never have imagined. Here are just a few of the incredible highlights from this past year:

- Welcomed Aboard PNW Coordinator, Chris Swan, and Three New Advisors: Veterans Dave Armstrong (USAF), Jake Wadsley (USN), and John Wyatt (USMC), bringing decades of leadership experience to CTD.
- 2024 Memorial Day Flag Relay with CTD board president, Endel Lee (RDML, USN, Retired), setting the stage for the first **National Memorial Day Flag Relay in 2025**.
- Our 3rd annual Kokanee Fishing Derby on Wallowa Lake, Oregon – a record-breaking event!
- Our team kept our lodge running in eastern Oregon and guided a *record 23 hunts* there alone.
- Two horse camping retreats in the Deschutes National Forest.
- Backpacking retreats in the Olympic National Forest/National Park.
- Alaska's first events – fishing & bear hunting for veterans, and an 11th Airborne retreat.
- Fly fishing and retreats in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Arkansas.
- Tennessee bass fishing, deer hunts and boar hunts.
- NE Indiana Hunt for Heroes
- North Dakota Pheasant Hunting Trip for Veterans
- Deer hunts for veterans in Washington and Montana.
- Epic Chaplains' Retreat this December, serving those who serve others.

As you read the stories in this newsletter and see the faces of those whose lives have been forever changed, please know this: these victories are ours together. Together, we're bringing hope, healing, and transformation to those who need it most. In this season of lights and of giving, we're reminded of the source of every good gift: Jesus Christ. It's His grace, guidance, and goodness that sustains us in this work. At Cross The Divide, even in life's darkest valleys we maintain our bearing because of the Light—the person and work of Jesus.

- Emile "Mo" Moured
CTD Executive Director

"THE PEOPLE WHO WALK IN DARKNESS WILL SEE A GREAT LIGHT. FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN A LAND OF DEEP DARKNESS, A LIGHT WILL SHINE...AND HE WILL BE CALLED 'WONDERFUL COUNSELOR', 'MIGHTY GOD', 'EVERLASTING FATHER', 'PRINCE OF PEACE'."

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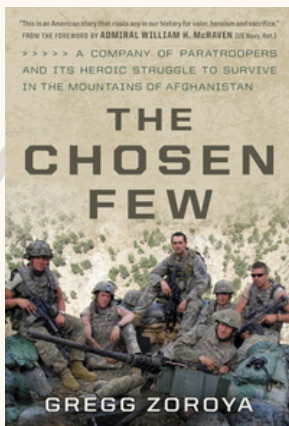
CTD partnered with wonder couple Jeff and Penny Campbell (StirrUp Purpose) for two horse camps in the Deschutes National Forest of Oregon this year -- one for a group of veterans and their spouses and another for a group of warfighters. Our veterans experienced the best of Oregon trail rides, fly fishing, hiking, and relaxing evenings around camp-cooked meals. The camaraderie and fellowship were rich, experiencing “lifemanship” through horsemanship.

A HUGE thank you to everyone who made our 3rd Annual Kokanee Fishing Derby a success! 42 boats and 130 participants brought enthusiasm to Wallowa Lake, despite experiencing all 4 seasons of weather that weekend!

Mark your calendars! We'll be back on Father's Day weekend 2025 !!

Additionally, Andy Marcum led **23 hunts -- a record number for CTD in Oregon...or anywhere!** This was made even more amazing by the fact that we had a few unexpected setbacks at the beginning of the year and thought we might have to dial back our Oregon events. But God's goodness allowed us to serve *even more* veterans throughout 2024!

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” James 1:17



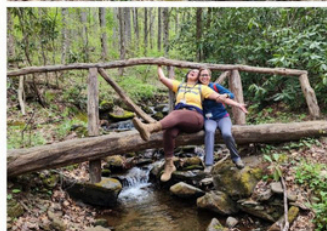
Veteran Chris McKaig and new CTD guide Lyle McDonald had an unforgettable antelope hunt! Chris is a recipient of the Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor for his heroic actions during the Battle of Wanat in Afghanistan. On July 13, 2008, 48 brave American soldiers faced a fierce attack from roughly 200-500 insurgents. Chris was stationed at "Topside" observation post, defending alongside his brothers in arms. The battle resulted in the tragic loss of 9 American soldiers and 27 wounded, but their bravery and sacrifice will never be forgotten.



The Battle of Wanat was one of the bloodiest battles of the war in Afghanistan. You can read more about Chris' experience in the book by Gregg Zoroya, **The Chosen Few**.

Tammy Ortung led our women's retreat in North Carolina and another event near Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA! We are grateful to have these transformative experiences for our women veterans for two years in a row. Amidst the breathtaking beauty of nature, we witnessed God's presence and grace working wonders in the lives of our attendees. Through meaningful discussions, and moments of reflection, they explored new avenues of growth & empowerment.

"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10



Cross The Divide supported hunting and fishing events and a retreat in Alaska this year!

This May, Cross The Divide's new Pacific Northwest Coordinator, Chris Swan, flew up to host twenty-one soldiers from 1-24 (11th Airborne Division "Arctic Wolves") on an outdoor retreat in Salcha, Alaska.



Then CTD sponsored an incredible experience with recently retired Army Colonel, Shanon Mosakowski, and two Army veterans! They not only had a successful black bear hunt but also enjoyed some amazing fishing adventures. Spending quality time together in God's creation doesn't get much better than this!

We offered fishing trips in Arkansas, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Virginia this year!

"Everyone should have the opportunity to attend an event like this at least once in their lifetime."

"This event was eye-opening. It brought me closer to God, and I loved being outdoors with Adam and Joe [CTD fly fishing guides]."

We couldn't agree more with these veteran participants – it's more than just fishing. It's about connection, reflection, and a chance to recharge in God's creation!



Leaving the Weight Behind: A Veteran's Journey to Renewal in the Wilderness



When I signed up for the Cross The Divide backpacking event, I expected to meet strangers from all parts of military life. Deep down, I had this feeling that there was something I needed to discover—something I needed but hadn't quite identified yet. I came here hoping to unplug from reality for a while and to try to figure out what that was. Looking back, I'd say I got exactly what I came for.

Since I retired two years ago, I hadn't really stopped to unpack the experiences I carried from my years of service. We veterans often just push forward without taking time to sit with the things we've been through. Here in the mountains, with a group of others who understood, I finally started processing some of that unspoken grief, frustration, and things that weigh on us long after the uniform comes off. During our conversations, we tackled subjects like these 'tidal waves' of emotions—grief, guilt, and the invisible burdens that don't go away when you leave the service. I even took the time to write some of it down, and it felt like lifting a weight I hadn't realized was there.

One of the most helpful parts of the trip was the structured way Cross The Divide led us through stages of 'innocence,' 'brokenness,' 'rescue,' and 'restoration.' This model was new to me, but it gave me a chance to look at life through a different lens – breaking down my experiences from life before the military all the way through

my military service, and up to today. For the first time, I could see my own story from a different angle, which opened up some new ways of thinking about things I had buried.

I leave that trip with a lot to bring back to my everyday life. But maybe the biggest thing is a renewed motivation to connect with my family, especially with my wife. We've been married for about 22 years, but I've always struggled with deep communication. Day-to-day conversations are fine; but the deep talks have been missing, and I know I'm responsible for a lot of that. After this week, I feel motivated to break down those walls and re-engage, even if it's hard.

Being in this setting—seven guys from different branches, isolated up in the mountains—was powerful. There was no one else around, no judgment, no fear, and no shame. It was a chance to let out things we've been carrying for years -- things that aren't doing us any good but are hard to release. Sometimes, just saying those things out loud is enough to stop carrying that "dead weight."

I'm going home with a renewed empathy, having heard everyone's different stories, and I realize now that I'm not alone in these struggles. And maybe most importantly, I'm going homeready to face things head-on, with my family and with myself.

Jimmy T., retired Navy veteran
2024 CTD backpacking participant



Cross The Divide was privileged to have representation from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps during this 4-day backpacking trip in the Olympic National Forest/ National Park!

The impact and transformation was visible as these veterans experienced four days of being 'unplugged', benefiting from their investment in themselves and in each other. The journey and stories shared amidst breathtaking landscapes was a testament to the power of experiencing God's truths in God's creation.

*" You will seek Me and find Me, when you
seek Me with all your heart."
Jeremiah 29:13*



In May of 2024 our stellar Tennessee Program Coordinator, Corey L Watson took out a couple Army vets on their first-ever pig hunt in Tennessee!

In addition to growing Cross The Divide in Tennessee through bass fishing and deer, turkey and hog hunts, Corey did an interview with Nashville News 5 this year!

To see more of Corey's story and other Cross The Divide stories, see the "Veterans Stories" playlist on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@cross_the_divide

THE MEMORIAL DAY FLAG RELAY IS GOING NATION WIDE IN 2025!

Join Us on this powerful journey spanning the entire nation, uniting communities from coast-to-coast in honoring those who have served our country. In each state this flag will symbolize our collective respect for the brave men and women who gave their last full measure for our freedom, reminding us all of the values we hold dear.

**Join us in this nationwide tribute
on May 26, 2025**

Learn more here: www.nmdfr.org

Support this event today at
www.crossthedivide.us/nmdfr

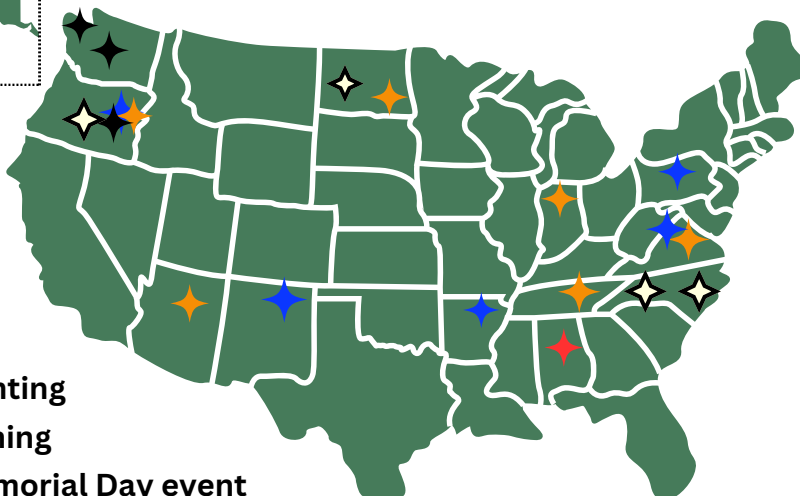
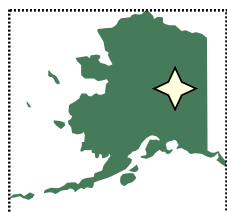




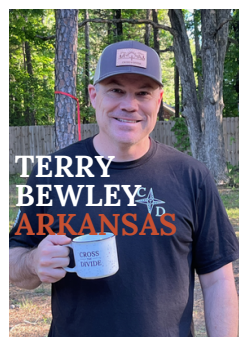
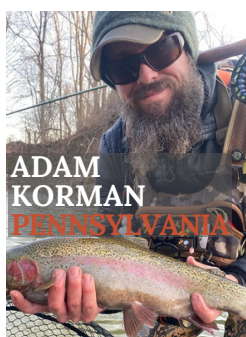
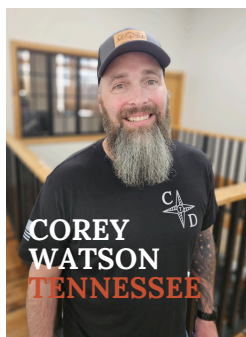
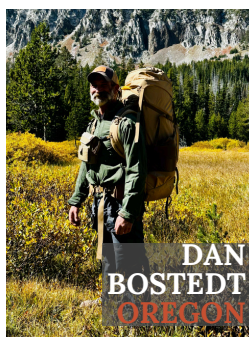
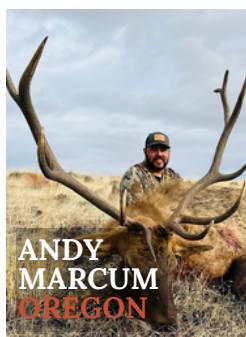
TEAM MEMBERS & EVENT LOCATIONS



2023-2024 CROSS THE DIVIDE EVENTS



- ★ Hunting
- ★ Fishing
- ★ Memorial Day event
- ★ Backpacking, Llama Packing, Horse Camping, Retreats
- ★ NEW events/location in 2024



Read more about our awesome Cross The Divide teammates on our website:
www.crossthedivide.us/meet-our-team

Rediscovering Faith, Focus and Family through the Hunt



I was going about my usual Tuesday morning on September 24th when my phone rang. I missed the call, but what came next was a surprise I never expected—a last-minute, unexpected opportunity to join a guided elk hunt along with a question: “Can you make it?” It was a dream opportunity, one I’d applied for years ago with this awesome organization but had forgotten about, thinking it was out of reach, ashamed I couldn’t afford it. I hesitated.

Then came the reply: “It’ll all be covered. You won’t pay anything.” I was euphoric and called my family.

At first, my wife, Chelle, and our teenage daughter, Bubba, were going to come along, but it didn’t work with their schedules. It would have meant a world of happiness if they could have been here. Just a few weeks prior my wife and I were arguing about our marriage, struggling, in debt, often just passing by each other, caught up in our separate activities, unable to effectively communicate our needs. I’ve been exploring my faith much more deeply and volunteering around the community to strengthen my new purpose, sort of like choosing a new direction for my life’s compass. These were all challenges we don’t usually share with anyone except professionals or the people closest to us, and it all weighed heavily on my heart.

But we decided to push on. So I started PCC’s/PCI’s - - changed the oil for the car, paid to repair the slow leaking tire, packed some clothes, made hot homemade brewed coffee for that long first-ever road trip journey of its kind to Joseph, Oregon. I greeted the smell of farmland, vineyards, and apple orchards with excitement, love and joy. Many of the views were marvelous to take in. I can hear and sense these feelings more now than I used to. As the drive went on, I stopped worrying about getting there on time and just enjoyed the experience. I felt a lot of gratitude towards God and those involved in making this happen. Finally, after a 7-hour journey I made it to the Cross The Divide lodge and unpacked.

Andy Marcum picked me up, and we went to zero-in the rifle. After shooting three accurate rounds at 150

yards, we went to secure my hunting tag and headed up to an elevated location. The views were breathtaking—rolling hills covered with dark blonde grass and rugged rock formations, and bright blue sky. We wondered aloud that these prairies probably hold a lot of history, bones, and spear or arrow head tips. I genuinely enjoyed the conversation up on that hill, “like we were pulling guard on an OP*” -- something I did a lot in the middle east. Andy and I shared stories about our time in service and why we had each come to this point in our lives.

As evening approached, we spotted a small group of five elk cresting the ridge moving down toward our position. We kept low, constantly scanning with each of our heads on a swivel while more elk started to appear along the ridge in the setting sun. With the golden hour fast approaching, Andy caught sight of a few elk moving behind us, just 200 meters away. We quietly adjusted, positioning ourselves for an effective lethal shot. Everything seemed to slow down as I took a few deep breaths, identifying the largest target in the group. A wisp of worry whirled with the wind carrying our scent down, and with it the likelihood of being detected.

BOOM! The shot echoed across the valley as the sight and smell of smoke and gunpowder from the amazing .308 weapon system cleared slowly. In the distance elk were retreating – one laying down. Everything else fell away as I was fully present in that singular moment. “We got her,” Andy said. “She’s not going anywhere!” Taking the life of an animal isn’t something I take lightly, and in the silence I thanked God for the experience and reflected on how blessed I am today.

I sincerely appreciate the Cross the Divide staff and all the people behind the scenes doing incredible work – donors and sponsors, volunteers and family members. THANK YOU.

This is not the end of the road. Not even close. It’s part of a new beginning.

Jesse P., retired Army veteran
2024 CTD hunting participant



THANK YOU for your support of our veteran programs this year!



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Poulsbo Veterans Day
Parade Committee

Supporting Churches in 2024



Enterprise Christian Church, Enterprise, OR
Poulsbo Community Church, Poulsbo, WA
Grace Lutheran Church, Enterprise, OR

