

# Big Sky

Oct. 22 - November 4, 2021  
Volume 12 // Issue #22

**Resort tax to fund winter COVID-19 testing**

**A hug for the hospital**

*Q&A: Rafael Pease on TGR's  
'Mountain Revelations'*

**Big Sky post office seeks  
solutions for growth**

**Insider's guide to  
Halloween in Big Sky**



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# OUTLAW PARTNERS

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## ON THE COVER:

Big Sky community members gathered on Oct. 18 at the Big Sky Medical Center to offer healthcare workers a symbolic hug. LPHS junior Jessie Bough organized the expression of gratitude as a reminder that COVID-19 is still impacting the community, especially frontline workers. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

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## Resort tax to fund winter COVID-19 testing

As COVID-19 cases in Gallatin County climb and regional hospitals are strained, the Big Sky Resort Area District approved the release of total of \$400,000 to partially fulfill an emergency request from the Big Sky Medical Center and fund a winter testing program.

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## A hug for the hospital

Lone Peak High School junior Jessie Bough has, for the most part, returned to her normal life playing sports and attending classes. She knows that as the pandemic persists, this is not true for many local healthcare workers. To express gratitude, Bough gathered more than 60 community members to offer the Big Sky Medical Center a symbolic hug.

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## Q&A: Rafael Pease on TGR's 'Mountain Revelations'

Teton Gravity Research's film "Mountain Revelations" features three professional snowboarders on a day 10-day human-powered expedition in Alaska's Chugach Mountains as they explore how their diverse backgrounds all lead them to a life in the mountains. EBS sat down with one of the riders, Rafael Pease, to hear about the film, which screens in Bozeman this month.

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## Big Sky post office seeks solutions for growth

With only 1,661 post office boxes to offer more than 3,500 people, the Big Sky post office is strapped for resources to expand capacity in order to meet the growing needs of the community. Local partners have enlisted Montana's congressional delegation to put pressure on the federal postal service to move the needle on the issue.

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## Insider's guide to Halloween in Big Sky

From pub crawls to pumpkin carving contests, the Big Sky Town Center is making sure Big Sky has plenty of spooky ways to spend Halloween. EBS compiled a guide to help get you through the action-packed weekend.

## Outlaw Partners' "Hoco Moment" photo contest winners

From spirit week to football, Lone Peak High School celebrated homecoming this year with a series of classic events to commemorate what it is to be a high schooler in Big Sky. Outlaw Partners hosted a social media "Capture the Hoco Moment" photo contest, encouraging members of the community to submit their favorite Homecoming moments. Two lucky winners received tickets to Museum of the Rockies. Thanks to all who participated!



### Sheena Kidd

A victorious end to flag football during Homecoming weekend festivities. PHOTO BY SHEENA KIDD



### Brooke Meredith

Lone Peak High School girls pose for a group shot before Homecoming. From left to right, Emerson Tatom, Charlie Sue Dreisbach, Ella Meredith, Greta McClain, Abby Meredith and Dylan Klein. PHOTO BY SARA MEREDITH

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25 TOWN CENTER AVENUE | 145 TOWN CENTER AVENUE | 66 MOUNTAIN LOOP ROAD | 181 CLUBHOUSE FORK



# EBS Snow Photo Contest

The first big winter storm brought in up to 16 inches of snow at Big Sky Resort. To celebrate the snow, we asked the community to show us the snow through their eyes. Congratulations to the winners of the EBS Snow Photo Contest, and thanks for everyone who submitted photos and participated.

## 1st place

### Ringo chasing powder in Beehive Basin

"West Philadelphia born and raised, now I'm chasing powder for the rest of my days." –*Ringo*

## 2nd place

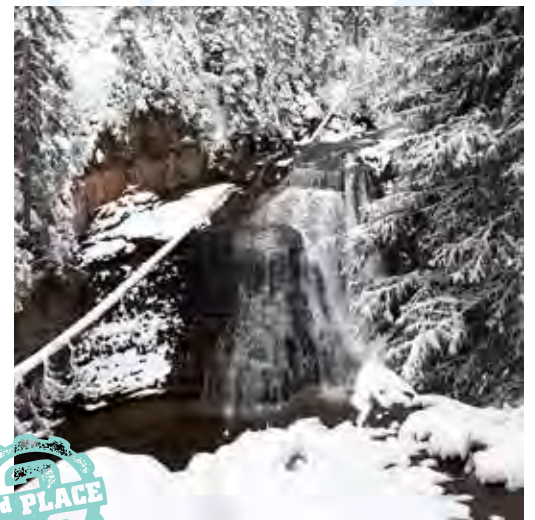
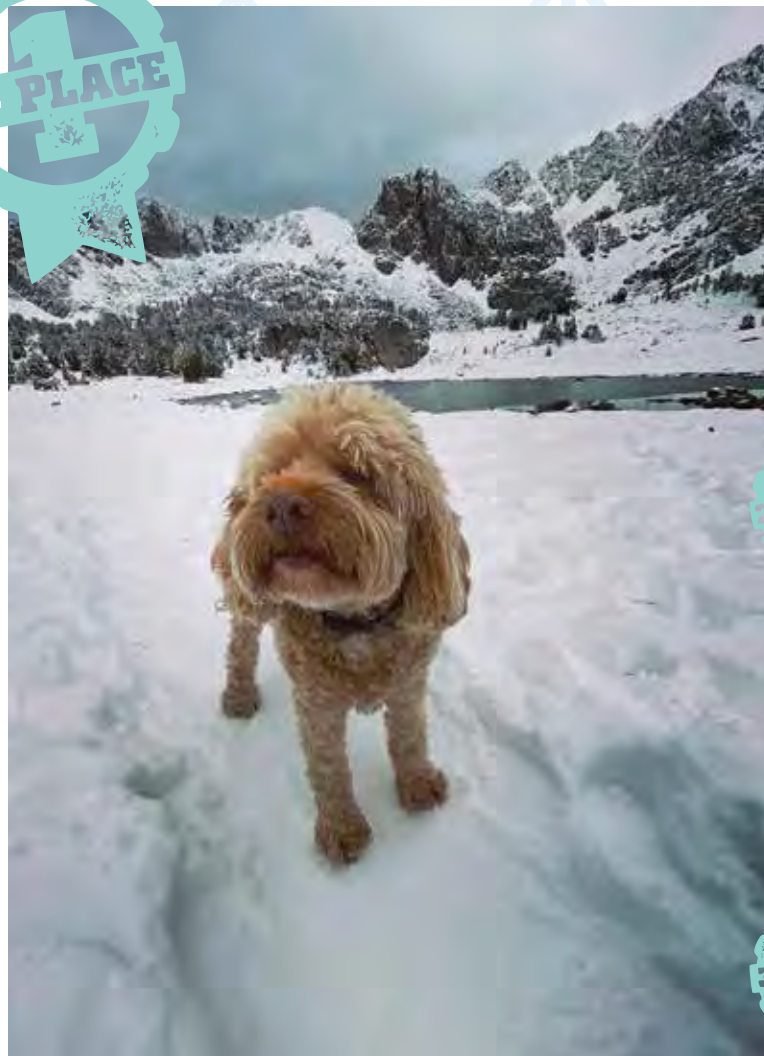
### Ousel Falls, Winter Edition

"Snow is like kindness, it beautifies everything it touches." –*Olivia R.*

## 3rd place

### First snow of the season

"Low Dog Road life." –*Mark F.*



## OP-ED:

# County courts facility bond

## GALLATIN COUNTY COMMISSION

Gallatin County voters: we heard you.

In two different elections, you rejected proposals to replace your aging Law and Justice Center. And we understand. The price tags for those proposed bonds were a lot to swallow.

But we listened. And we're coming back to you this November, voters, with a project that is less expensive for you and still addresses the needs of our courts – a critical pillar of our democracy and economy that we are obligated to provide for our citizens.

In this November's election, Gallatin County is asking voters to decide on a bond to replace the current Law and Justice Center in Bozeman. The bond would pay for a Gallatin County courts building that will house four district courts, two justice courts, clerks of court, youth court and probation, standing master, Self-Help Law Center, a security detail office, and a public community and jury assembly room.

Instead of coming to voters asking for \$71 million or \$59 million like we did in the past, we have pared the design and functions of this building down to a simple courts building with an ask of voters we feel is more reasonable: \$29 million.

This new building is the only cost-effective solution to Gallatin County's long overdue need for safer and more efficient courts.

The current building is unsafe and a disaster waiting to happen.

The Law and Justice Center is a cinderblock building with no rebar that was built in the 1960s as a Catholic high school. It was never designed to be a courts facility.

It is structurally unsound, does not have a fire suppression system, and is missing secured separation between crime victims and their accused, jurors and counselors, family members in dispute, and the public from all of these groups.

These amount to a disaster waiting to happen to the hundreds of community members who work in and enter the building each day.

The current building is too small and the resulting logjam of cases is hurting us county-wide.

Gallatin County's district courts handle a civil and criminal caseload requiring at least seven judges. Three district court judges are currently shuffling that load.

The state has given us a fourth district court judge. But Gallatin County is responsible for providing that new judge and their support staff with a workplace and we have nowhere to put them.

Without adequate personnel and space to hear and process all these cases, the result is a logjam pushing some cases months and years out.

The impact of this logjam on civil cases is devastating. Highly emotional family law cases can be dragged out for years. Small businesses have gone bankrupt before seeing their day in court.

Justice delayed is justice denied. We need better space to provide the access to justice our citizens are entitled to.

The need for a new building is not going away so the county has worked hard to reduce costs.

We get it. Voters are tired of paying more taxes. We are taxpayers ourselves and feel your pain.

But the county is constitutionally required to provide these services and spaces. Courts are not optional. They are a necessary pillar of our democracy. And an update for our local courts is long overdue – architects told the county in 1999 that the current building is structurally unsafe.

The cost for taxpayers is \$6.70 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value (NOT what Zillow says your house could sell for). So a home assessed at \$500,000 would pay \$33.50 annually, for example.

That cost for will decrease as the cost of the bond is spread across a larger population as our county continues growing and more taxpayers share the burden.

We have worked hard to reduce this project's cost by using savings and existing funds, finding creative funding mechanisms, and spending federal funds to buy a new sheriff's office building in Four Corners to reduce the size and cost of this building.

If this bond does not pass, we are uncertain of exactly how we will move forward. But what we do know is that any other options will be more expensive and inefficient, costing taxpayers more in money and time over the long haul.

Gallatin County citizens deserve safer and more efficient courts, and a new building is the only cost-effective solution to this longstanding issue.

For more information on the bond, visit [gallatin.mt.gov](http://gallatin.mt.gov).

Ballots for the Nov. 2 election were mailed to Gallatin County active registered voters on Oct. 13. They are due back no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day. For more information on voting, visit [gallatinvotes.com](http://gallatinvotes.com).

Scott MacFarlane, Joe Skinner, Zach Brown  
Gallatin County Commissioners



# Big Sky's *inaugural* CommUNITY Forum

**Tuesday,  
October 26<sup>th</sup>  
@ The Wilson Hotel**

**Community Expo: 4:30pm - 9:00pm  
Partner Presentations: 5:30pm - 9:00pm**

*Order of Presentations:*

- Public Funding
- Philanthropy
- Housing & Planning
- Public Works
- Public Health & Safety
- Arts, Culture, & Events
- Recreation & Conservation
- Economic Development
- Education & Childcare
- Community Support Services

The event will kick-off with the Community Expo allowing the public to engage directly with those that make Big Sky BETTER TOGETHER. Short presentations from over 35 local entities including government, non-profit, and private businesses will highlight projects, programs, and initiatives within Big Sky. Attendees can move freely between Presentations and the Expo, and may arrive at any time and stay for part or all of the event.

Appetizers & Refreshments provided.  
A recording will be shared after the event.  
For more info visit: [ResortTax.org/Community-Forum/](http://ResortTax.org/Community-Forum/)

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- Big Sky Zoning Advisory Committee
- Big Sky Trails, Recreation, & Parks District
- Gallatin County (Courts Facility Bond)



## Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport set to break record

**EBS STAFF**

BOZEMAN – After a 50 percent reduction in airport traffic in 2020, Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport is on pace to set the record for most passengers in a calendar year, breaking the 2019 record of 1.57 million total passengers. Approximately 1.5 million passengers flew through the airport through September.

All nine airlines that fly with the Bozeman airport have added additional seasonal flights to several larger cities such as San Francisco and Chicago. Airport growth will likely stabilize next year, according to Airport Director Brian Sprenger, but counts will remain high.

The airport opened a 70,000 square foot concourse last year, complete with a new restaurant and bar as well as five new gates. At the end of the month, the airport will begin constructing a new general aviation project on the north side of the airport and has plans to create a new baggage system in early 2022.

## Yellowstone hosts record visitor count in September

**EBS STAFF**

MAMOTH – Yellowstone National Park broke yet another visitation record this September. With 882,078 recreation visits, visitation increased 5 percent over September 2020 and 27 percent over September 2019 according to a National Park Service news release.

“Never in Yellowstone’s history have we seen such substantial visitation increases in such a short amount of time,” said Yellowstone Superintendent Cam Sholly. “We will continue working with our teams and partners to develop and implement appropriate short- and long-term actions for managing increasing visitation across the park.”

Yellowstone is monitoring the impact of visitation, focusing on park resources, staffing, infrastructure, and operations, visitor experience and gateway communities. The park is using funds from the Great American Outdoors Act to reduce traffic congestion, improve transportation infrastructure and elevate visitor experiences.

*More data on park visitation is available at [nps.gov/yell](https://nps.gov/yell)*

## Wildfires torch 940K acres across Montana this year

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – Fire season in Montana started early, burned late and colored the state with wildfire smoke in 2021. With nearly 940,000 acres burnt across the state, this year marks the most acreage burned since 2017.

By July 14, Gov. Greg Gianforte issued both wildfire emergency declarations and drought declarations for the state. On July 22, Gianforte brought in the National Guard to help aid Montana’s wildfire response, providing support for aviation, security and ground operations.

Through late July and early August, fire season turned up the heat in Montana, with burns across the state nearly doubling in the span of one week. Bozeman recorded a five-day streak of air quality rated as unhealthy for sensitive groups, according to the Bozeman Daily Chronicle.

*For a look back at the Big Sky area fire season and for ongoing updates, visit [explorebigsky.com/wildfire-news](https://explorebigsky.com/wildfire-news).*

## Gallatin County Commission denies BSSD zoning exemption

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – After passing through the Big Sky Planning & Zoning Advisory Committee at an Oct. 4 meeting, Big Sky School District’s requested exemption for their stadium lights was denied by Gallatin County.

The school initially applied for a 402 exemption in August that would allow for their new stadium lights to exceed 30 feet.

Previously, local boards had no power to deny a 402 exemption request per Montana law, but a recent amendment to the law took effect Oct. 1, restoring boards’ power to deny. The Gallatin County Planning & Zoning Commission, which the Big Sky board advises, considered BSSD’s application under the new statute based on a recommendation from the Gallatin County Attorney’s Office. The language in the new code is vague according to Commissioner Zach Brown, putting the commission in a difficult spot.

“Unfortunately enforcing zoning regulations often means refereeing disagreements between neighbors and that was the position we found ourselves in,” he said.

The school now has two options according to Sean O’Callaghan with the Gallatin County Planning & Community Development Department: It can either change the lights to comply with local zoning regulations or apply for a variance.

Representatives from the district declined to provide comment.

## Fall at WMPAC continues with Nella

**WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

BIG SKY – The Warren Miller Performing Arts Center’s fall lineup is designed for locals who want more options for how to spend the off season. On Oct. 23, singer Nella will perform at 7 p.m.

“Nella is legitimately an international rock star,” said John Zirkle, WMPAC’s executive director. “Her talent is truly incredible, and we are beyond lucky that we were able to book her.”

Born in Venezuela, Nella skyrocketed to international renown fueled by her powerhouse voice and undeniable presence. In 2019, her hit “Me Lllaman Nella” (“They Call Me Nella”) surpassed 1.4 million Spotify streams. The title track was named the 14th best song of 2019 of any genre by the New York Times.

Merging the folklore roots of Venezuela and modern production, her sound resounds in every corner of the globe.

“Even if you don’t speak Spanish, her music will move you,” Zirkle said. “She has that kind of talent.”

*Tickets and more information are available at [warrenmillerpac.org](https://warrenmillerpac.org)*



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# Community gathers to offer symbolic hug to healthcare workers

PHOTOS BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – In soft pre-dusk light on Oct. 18, more than 60 community members encircled the Big Sky Medical Center, their arms outstretched and the corners of their smiles peeking out above the top of their face masks. Organized by Lone Peak High School junior Jessie Bough, this string of people donning red and holding pictures of hearts was a symbolic hug for local healthcare staff, a big thank you to the frontline workers who have battled the COVID-19 pandemic face-to-face for 18 months.

“I just have been realizing that COVID-19 is ... still pretty bad,” Bough said after the hug disbanded. “I’ve been going back to my normal life. I get to play volleyball, I get to go to school. But the healthcare workers are still very stressed, they’re still dealing with this every day, and I just want to show appreciation to our healthcare workers, especially the Big Sky Medical Center.”

During the symbolic hug, a handful of medical center staff stepped outside to watch and wave. Despite the distance that stood between them and the community, their expressions indicated that they had been touched in some way nonetheless.



PHOTO BY SKYLAB MEDIA HOUSE





# Resort tax board invests in COVID-19 testing, medical center needs

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

**BIG SKY** – As COVID-19 cases in Gallatin County climb, the Big Sky Resort Area District approved the use of \$400,000 in resort tax funds to support efforts to combat the virus in the Big Sky community.

At an Oct. 13 meeting the board unanimously voted to fund a \$150,000 winter COVID-19 testing program as well as to partially fulfill an emergency request from the Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center in the amount of \$250,000 for a new testing machine and storage facility.

Following a widely utilized testing program last winter, resort tax board member Kevin Germain will lead the implementation of another testing program ahead of the 2021-22 ski season.

Gallatin County remains in a high transmission status and is currently seeing an upward trend in active COVID-19 cases with 552 active cases as of publication time. On Oct. 13, more than 510 Montanans were reported hospitalized with the virus, topping the state's previous pandemic record of 506 last November. A Sept. 20 report from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services found that from Feb. 7 to Sept. 4, nearly 90 percent of patients hospitalized for COVID-19 were not fully vaccinated.

Montana briefly led the nation in cases per capita on Oct. 20 then fell to second, according to the New York Times COVID tracker, with 85 cases per 100,000 people per day topped only by Alaska which has 117 cases per 100,000 people per day.

Hospitals across the state of Montana are feeling the pressure, and 150 members of the Montana National Guard have been sent to hospitals including 10 that went to Bozeman Health.

In an Oct. 13 interview with EBS, Taylor Rose, director of clinical services & operations at the Big Sky Medical Center, said he expects this trend to continue in upcoming months. "I would say we are expecting a lot more COVID than we saw last winter," Rose told EBS. He compared last year with this year and said that there are more people coming in to the hospital with COVID and staying as inpatients this year.

"All of 2020 we maybe had a handful of COVID inpatients and we've had COVID patients stay in our hospital in inpatient status almost nonstop the entire month of September and October," Rose said.

Though the medical center requested \$400,000, the \$250,000 the resort tax board allocated to BSMC will in part fund the construction of a new supply room, which will open up an operating room that previously served as a supply room. Freeing up the OR will mean more space for COVID-19 patients and access to oxygen available in that room.

The resort tax money will also fund a new PCR test machine, which will increase capacity to 500-plus tests a day, up from the 48 tests a day the center's current analyzer processes, according to Rose. Turnaround times will also improve with the new machine giving staff the ability to process tests through the night and consistently return results within 24 hours.



The Big Sky Resort Area District Board at its October meeting approved \$400,000 in total to support both the Big Sky Medical Center and a new COVID-19 testing program. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

Both medical center projects will cost approximately \$1.5 million. Funding for these projects will come from both government and philanthropic grants, including \$300,000 from the Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, as well as Bozeman Health and Big Sky Medical Center dollars, and now the \$250,000 provided by the district.

Board members were eager to support BSMC and no downsides were brought up in their discussion. The testing program, however, spurred a thorough conversation during the meeting about whether or not funding the testing program would be the best use of public monies.

Board Vice Chair Ciara Wolfe voiced questions about who would have access to the tests this winter as well as concerns about

how far into the future BSRAD will be funding testing programs since COVID-19 will be a long-term reality.

Germain countered that investing the \$150,000, or about 1.5 percent of BSRAD allocations, in community health is a sound investment by the board.

Board Chair Sarah Blechta advocated for the allocation. "I think this is a great idea and I think we need to do everything we can do to keep our community safe and our economy running here in Big Sky," she said during the meeting.

Board members also discussed lack of testing availability in the county and challenges businesses will face this year. Currently, a Montana law, House Bill 702, says businesses cannot require their employees to be vaccinated and they cannot discriminate based on vaccination status.

Meanwhile, President Joe Biden is developing a rule that requires all employers with 100 or more employees to either ensure their workforce is fully vaccinated or to require their unvaccinated employees to provide a negative test result on a weekly basis. Germain said large employers in Big Sky are working on a way to navigate the conflicting directives.

After a lengthy discussion, the board voted to allocate \$150,000 to fund a testing program for the 2021-22 winter. The plan is to make the self-tests available at the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce for residents to pick up and administer at home. Should an individual receive a positive result, they will then deal directly with contact tracers, alleviating a lot of the pressure felt by BSRAD staff running the program last year.

"I can guarantee that people were kept out of the hospital through that surveillance program," Rose told EBS, "and as we do that this winter that will probably be the case again." Last season, approximately 58,206 tests were administered by the surveillance testing program, revealing 1,085 positive cases over the course of the winter.

"[Testing] is important because the pandemic hasn't ended," Germain said in an interview with EBS after the meeting. "COVID is still here, we still need to support our community to navigate the pandemic and the best way that we can find as a resort tax board is by providing tests to our community, just like we did last winter, as well as supporting our hospital system as you saw in the \$250,000 that was allocated."



# Big Sky post office seeks solutions for limited capacity, resources

BY BELLA BUTLER

**BIG SKY** – While Big Sky is filling out with numerous amenities of the modern world, some basic services remain hard to come by in this rapidly growing resort community. Having your post office box is one of them.

The current post office, located in the Big Sky Meadow Village, houses 1,661 post office boxes. Census data from 2020 reports that the population of Big Sky as a Census Designated Place is more than 3,500 people.

The Big Sky Post Office, or Post Office LLC as it's also known, is a Contract Postal Unit, meaning it's operated by a third-party supplier, Gallatin Partners, Inc., rather than by the United States Postal Service. As Big Sky grows rapidly so do its postal needs, and Post Office LLC with the help of the Big Sky Resort Area District is seeking federal support to expand operations.

Al Malinowski, president of Gallatin Partners, took over the post office lease from the Big Sky Owners Association in 2001 and has been operating it ever since.

"I estimate that we could easily double the number of boxes that we currently have," Malinowski told EBS. "And while I wouldn't expect we'd fill them immediately, it would relieve a lot of the pressure that we currently have from people who can't get boxes and allow for some future growth as this community continues to develop."

Clusters of boxes occasionally become available as people no longer need them, but Malinowski says they're snatched up quickly. While there's no official waitlist, one post office employee estimated that 3,000 customer families receive their mail using general delivery, the default option for those without a box. General delivery is intended, according to Malinowski, for part-time residents and vacationers.

CPUs lack services provided by USPS locations, like passport service, and they also don't employ USPS staff. Without anyone from USPS on site, Malinowski said it's been hard to communicate the growing space between available resources and need to the federal postal service.

"We reached a point where the [USPS] stopped being able to really understand the growth that we were experiencing," he said. Because CPU rate increases to support growth must be approved by USPS, this gap in understanding has translated to financial deficit for the post office.



Patea White retrieves a package in the back of the post office. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

According to Malinowski, Post Office LLC's budget for 2021 is approximately \$430,000. USPS has offered \$317,000 in operational funding.

And yet, postal service must go on. In Big Sky, this has meant dipping into local public funds.

"In the last seven years, our reliance on resort tax has grown significantly because we've not been able to get [USPS] to agree to contract increases equal to the amount that the costs are increasing," Malinowski said. "The rate that they've been willing to offer has been a fraction of what I've asked for."

The post office's most recent resort tax award of \$131,000 is up more than 90 percent from its award seven years ago.

"We've contributed just over \$850,000 since the inception of the post office," said BSRAD Executive Director Daniel Bierschwale. In the last year, BSRAD has articulated to its applicants an interest in funding more project-based requests rather than operations. Post Office LLC's fiscal year 2021 request was earmarked entirely for operations.

"This is not sustainable in its current iteration," Bierschwale said. "We have to figure out how we can move forward for the community at large in another way."

In pursuit of "another way," Bierschwale and Malinowski have engaged Montana Sens. Jon Tester and Steve Daines to help garner federal attention from USPS.

"Montanans depend on the U.S. Postal Service for everything from paying bills to filling prescriptions, and as Big Sky continues to grow, those needs are becoming more and more apparent," Tester wrote in a statement to EBS. "I am urging USPS to sit down with members of the community to begin these important conversations about how to improve and expand critical mail services, and I will keep pushing until everyone in the Big Sky community has access to the dependable postal services they need to thrive."

Daines' staff has toured the current facility, as have commissioners from Gallatin and Madison counties.

"The postal service is critical to Montanans in every corner of our state, especially for our veterans and rural communities," Daines wrote in a statement to EBS. "That's why I'm working to pass bipartisan legislation that would support and revitalize the USPS so that all Montanans can continue to benefit from their essential services."

When contacted for comment, a media representative from USPS provided the following statement: "The Postal Service conducts regular discussions with contractors regarding service and terms. We recognize that with many of our resort offices, seasonal volumes and populations can be a challenge and we will continue to work with our supplier to efficiently provide service to the local community with available resources.

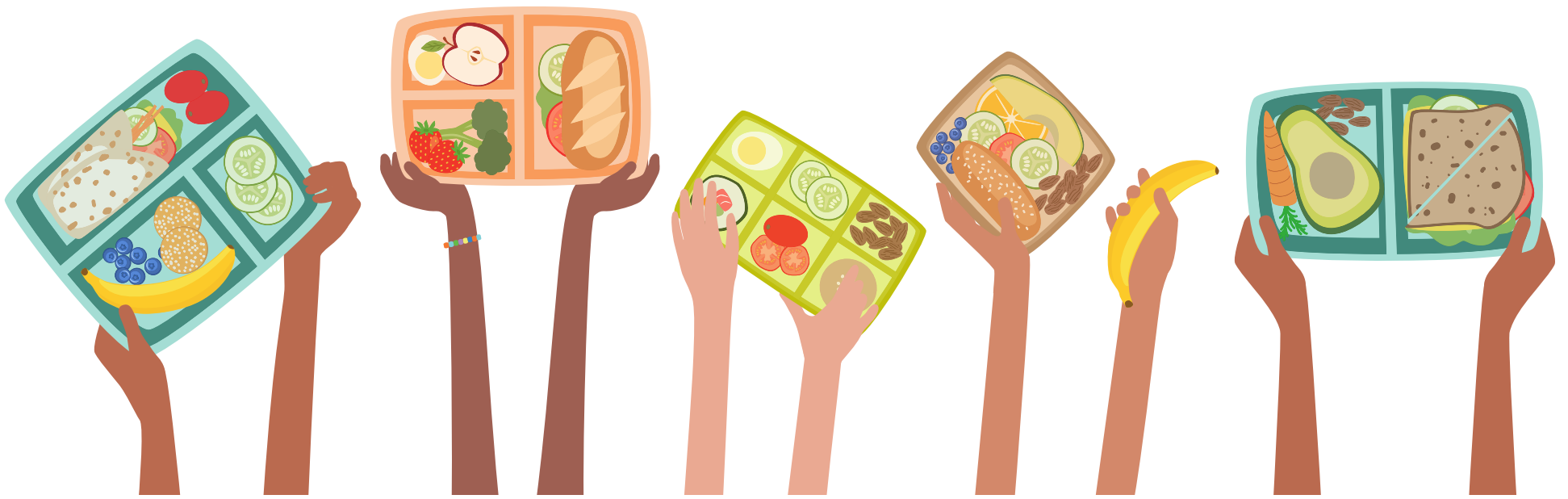
As Bierschwale and Malinowski see it, potential solutions could include a physical expansion of the post office facility to make room for more service, or having USPS take over post office operations. As the holidays approach and with them mountains of packages, Post Office LLC and BSRAD say they will continue to press the conversation at the federal level.

"We've long thought we would be the bridge to that transition [beyond CPU designation] and we're still optimistic that we can be," Malinowski said. "But not knowing when that transition might occur makes it hard for us to know what our involvement can be and for how long."



Left to right, Cherrie Downer, White and Al Malinowski greet customers at the post office desk. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER





## Local organization provides 3,000 lunches for healthcare workers

BY TUCKER HARRIS

BIG SKY/BOZEMAN – Healthcare workers have been working tirelessly for more than a year and a half to keep communities healthy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. One Big Sky organization is spearheading an initiative to give something back to those giving so much of themselves on the frontline.

The Yellowstone Club Community Foundation is working in collaboration with Bozeman Health to provide boxed lunches for the Big Sky Medical Center and Bozeman’s Deaconess Hospital staff on a few select Thursdays, an initiative aptly called Thankful Thursdays. Thankful Thursdays were crafted as a way to express support and directly

benefit Bozeman Health staff. “Healthcare workers are continuing day after day, doing the best they can, to serve us,” said Ciara Wolfe, VP of philanthropy at YCCF. “We wanted to say thank you and try to lift their spirits in a kind way.”

YCCF has executed three Thankful Thursdays this month, two in Big Sky and one in Bozeman. Over those three days, 3,000 boxed lunches were distributed to healthcare staff, catered by BYWOM and Gourmet Gals in Big Sky and Firehouse Subs in Bozeman. The final Thankful Thursdays will be at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital on Thanksgiving day.

Funding for Thankful Thursdays is being drawn from money donated by Yellowstone Club members in the spring of 2020 that went into the

Big Sky Relief fund, used for pandemic support. In addition to Thankful Thursdays, the donations have funded grants for nonprofits who are starting mental or behavioral health programs, vaccine incentive programs and grants to individuals who lost work before unemployment benefits kicked in.

This token of appreciation has not gone unnoticed. “It’s amazing, honestly,” said Paige Bichler, Deaconess Hospital Emergency Department nurse manager. “Staff are tired and stressed, people are tired and stressed, not just in the hospital, but in our community. Anything to lift the spirits of our staff is pretty wonderful and we are very grateful for the lunch.”

Lauren Brendel, system director of marketing and communications and public information officer at Bozeman Health, compared the tireless efforts of Bozeman Health staff to running a marathon without a finish line. She says the best way community members can help support their healthcare workers is by getting immunized against COVID-19. Recognize that everyone is tired, she said, so be kind to one another.

Wolfe said that YCCF hopes Thankful Thursdays will serve as a model for other businesses and nonprofits to give back to our healthcare workers in ways that they can. The greater community of Big Sky has found other ways to express their gratitude during this trying period for healthcare workers, including posting yard signs with supportive messages, sending cards and emails and organizing a virtual hug (see page 8).

“It’s really heart-warming to see the community support of our healthcare workers,” Brendel said. “It’s all so thoughtful and definitely appreciated; these meals help boost morale of everyone who’s working and caring for patients.”



Bozeman Health staff at Big Sky Medical Center enjoy their boxed lunches catered by Gourmet Gals at a Thankful Thursdays event. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE CLUB COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



# BIG SKY CHAMBER

Every year in October, we celebrate **Support Your Local Chamber Day**. As a nonprofit, membership organization, all of the work that we do is for our members. The best way you can support us is by letting us know how best we can support you! Take a moment to look at our priorities below and see how best you can get plugged in.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

Big Sky Economic Profile • BigSkyBiz Newsletter • Social Media Features • Membership E-Blasts • Member Videos on Social



## ADVOCACY & ACCESS

Board of Directors • Committees • Chamber Days at the Capitol • Joint County Commission Meeting • Community Involvement • Cellular Connectivity and Capacity Increase • Industry Listening Sessions • Strengthening Local, Regional, and State Relationships with Leadership

## DEVELOPMENT

Doing Business Right Webinars • Leadership Big Sky • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## NETWORKING & VISIBILITY

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*The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce is a 501 (c)(6) nonprofit, membership organization*



## SECTION 2:

SPORTS AND  
ENVIRONMENT &  
OUTDOORS

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Let's redefine those bucket lists pg. 20



Tipis help bring to light Indigenous ties to Yellowstone pg. 23

## LPHS volleyball wins homecoming match, falls on Senior Night

BY BELLA BUTLER AND GABRIELLE GASSER

**BIG SKY** – The Lone Peak High School Big Horns varsity volleyball team played two important matches celebrating their Homecoming and Senior nights. The Big Horns defeated the Harrison/Willow Creek Wildcats in their homecoming game but fell in three to the White Sulphur Springs Hornets on Senior Night.

The Big Horns took the court on Oct. 9 for their homecoming game with high energy bolstered by the cheering crowd.

The younger Wildcat squad struggled throughout the evening to play defense and gain a foothold against the Big Horns' momentum.

With the help of serving streaks by junior libero Jessie Bough and junior setter Emily Graham, the Big Horns won the first game 25-13 and the second game 25-8.

The Big Horns faltered briefly in game three with only one point left to win, relinquishing six points to the Wildcats before ultimately winning 25-14 to deafening cheers.

On Oct. 15, the Big Horns sought another win on their own court for the last home match of 2021 against the Hornets. In a touching celebration that brought several in the gym to tears, the home team recognized sole senior TJ Nordahl before she stepped on the Big Horn hardwood for the last time in her career.

Nordahl was escorted onto the court by her parents as her teammates, including her younger sister, read prepared statements. "TJ has played an influential role on the Lone



Lone Peak High School senior TJ Nordahl is escorted by her parents at the Bough-Dolan Athletic Center as she's honored on Senior Night. Her dad wiped away her tears as her teammates read prepared statements, thanking her for her mentorship. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

Peak Big Horns volleyball team over the past four years," said teammate Maddie Cone. "Not only has she helped lead our team to success but has shown us how to be the best versions of ourselves, on and off the court."

LPHS junior defensive specialist Haley Houghteling took the place of absent setter Graham. The Big Horns struggled to find the rhythm they'd built over the course of the season, while the Hornets consistently fed the ball to big front row players.

Lone Peak showed moments of promise with strong defensive plays at the net by sophomore middle blocker Ella Meredith and freshman right-side hitter Claire Hoadley, paired with consistent digs by junior libero Bough. Nordahl kept the Big Horns competitive with her signature dump to the far-right corner of the Hornets' 10-foot line, but the Hornets kept their control, winning the first game 25-18.

A big Hornet block stifled the Big Horns offense in the next two games. The Big Horns tied the second game at 21 but lost momentum, giving up the game 25-21.

In game three, Lone Peak refused to let White Sulphur gain the same early-game lead but still lost to the Hornets 25-12.

Though her last game ended in a loss, Nordahl stood smiling in front of a photo board signed with notes from her peers.

"I had a lot of time on the court and I definitely improved a lot," she said. "It's sad to leave. It was a very emotional night."

The Big Horns defeated the West Yellowstone Wolverines in their final regular season game on Oct. 19. They will now enter the District 11-C Tournament Oct. 28-30.

## LPHS football team splits homecoming and Senior Night games

BY AL MALINOWSKI  
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

**BIG SKY** – The Lone Peak High School Big Horns football team ended two tight games with both a victory and a loss. During a heart-pounding overtime, the Big Horns defeated the Ennis Mustangs for homecoming but lost to the Twin Bridges Falcons in a two-point game for Senior Night.

In an exciting finish, the Big Horns found a way to make one more play than the Ennis Mustangs at their Oct. 8 homecoming game, earning the home team a hard-fought 38-36 dramatic overtime victory.

Ennis took an early 6-0 lead but turned the ball over twice in the second quarter. Sophomore quarterback Juliusz Shipman scored two one-yard sneaks and later found sophomore George Helms on an out pattern for a 20-yard score.

The Mustangs ended the first half with a 15-yard run and a Point After Touchdown, or PAT and the Big Horns led at halftime, 18-14.

After halftime Ennis took the lead with a touchdown and successful PAT pass. With three minutes to play, an aggressive Big Horn forced a turnover and



Lone Peak High School senior football players were recognized during Senior Night at the team's Oct. 16 game versus Twin Bridges. (left to right) Isaac Singer, Robert Pruiett, Henry Slade, Aiden Miller. PHOTO BY LINDSEY PRUIETT

Big Horn senior Henry Slade recovered it at the 21-yardline.

With two seconds remaining on the clock, Shipman heaved a desperate pass to the end zone that was tipped by both a Big Horn receiver and Mustang defender before George Helms snatched it out of the air.

After a missed PAT, the game went into overtime with the score locked at 30 apiece.

In overtime, Junior Pierce Farr scored for the Big Horns on the first play from scrimmage. This time, Lone Peak added the two-point conversion, their first successful attempt of the game. Ennis countered

with a 5-yard touchdown but the Big Horns shut down the PAT attempt sealing their victory.

The LPHS football team found themselves in another physical contest on Saturday, Oct. 16, this time against the visiting Falcons who spoiled Lone Peak's Senior Night, winning 28-26.

The game began with the Big Horns losing a fumble on the first snap. While the Falcons were unable to capitalize on the miscue, turnovers would become a trend that would impact the outcome of the game.



Four possessions later, Lone Peak took an 8-0 lead when Shipman hit freshman Bridger Flores for a 24-yard touchdown pass, followed by a 2-point conversion pass to Farr. The Big Horns took a 20-16 lead into halftime.

During halftime, four seniors, Aiden Miller, Robert Pruiett, Isaac Singer and Henry Slade, were honored for their contributions to the football team during their years at LPHS and numerous Big Horn parents and fans expressed how much each will be missed next season.

Lone Peak seized momentum in the second half when Twin Bridges fumbled on their first possession, and the Big Horns recovered at the Falcon 14-yard line. On third down, Shipman found Flores for a touchdown and after a missed PAT led 26-16.

Twin Bridges recovered at their own 25-yard line and responded with a 5-yard touchdown run by junior Connor Nye.

With time winding down, Shipman threw a deep pass as a Falcon defender closed in and the Falcon's Nye intercepted it to seal the win.

"They made the plays that needed to be made when they had to," LPHS Head Coach James Miranda said. "I'm proud of the guys, the way they played ... It's just this time we came up short."

Lone Peak, 2-5 in the season as of press time, hosted the Choteau Bulldogs on Thursday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m.

## LPHS girls soccer ends on high note, boys compete in quarterfinal playoff

BY BELLA BUTLER, GABRIELLE GASSER AND DAN KELLY

**BIG SKY** – The Lone Peak High School soccer teams had a busy October celebrating Senior Day, homecoming and hosting the first ever playoff game in Big Sky.

The Lady Big Horns fell to the Livingston Park High School Rangers on Senior Day but ended their season with a win defeating the Lockwood Lions for their homecoming matchup. The boys team also lost to the Rangers and defeated the Lions and extended their season by two more games in the Eastern Class A Conference playoffs.

The Lady Big Horns took an early lead scoring off a corner kick driven into the back of the net. As the half came to a close, Lone Peak led 1-0.

Four seniors, Sophia Cone, Carly Wilson, Campbell Johnson and Tristen Clack, were recognized at half time. Each player was honored with their family at midfield as fans cheered to congratulate the departing seniors.

Lady Big Horns Head Coach Jaci Sand described Cone in her written statement as a "threatening soccer player with fast, smooth and skilled footwork" and Wilson as a "complete offensive and defensive player." Johnson was highlighted as a player "ready to cut and shoot anywhere on the field" and Clack was celebrated for her "calm composure, always sure of what needs to be done."

"I'm grateful to have coached these four young ladies who add so much strength to the soccer sisterhood," Sand wrote.

As the game continued, Livingston broke through the Lone Peak defense, scoring off a corner kick in the 65th minute. This was soon followed by a second-chance goal in the 68th minute, giving them a lead they would not relinquish. The Lady Big Horns fought hard, but when the final whistle blew, Livingston had defeated Lone Peak 2-1.

Senior Day started similarly for the boys, with a quick Big Horn goal in the 9th minute that set the tone for the match. Leading 1-0, Lone Peak went head-to-head with Livingston for the remainder of the first half.

Big Horn seniors Tony Brester and Kyan Smit were also lauded at halftime for their leadership roles, hard work and contributions to camaraderie. LPHS Head Coach Tony Coppola and Assistant Coach Jeremy Harder thanked Brester for his dedication to the program, his leadership and his can-do attitude. "Simply put, Tony is a leader," Coppola wrote in his statement. Smit was recognized for his commanding presence on the field and his "ability to keep the team focused with a balance of grace and fervor," Coppola wrote.

The Rangers scored in the 68th minute when a free-kick was crossed into the box and hammered home by a Livingston player. Livingston carried the day by a final score of 2-1 over the Big Horns.

In their final games of the season for homecoming, the LPHS boys and girls soccer teams went out with pride, winning both matchups against the Lockwood High School Lions.

The girls took the field first dominating the ball throughout. The Lady Lions did not get many

shots on goal and the Big Horns put up a team effort, spreading their five goals out across five different scorers.

Wilson, Johnson, junior Avery Dickerson, junior Skylar Manka and sophomore Chloe Unger each contributed a point to the 5-0 victory.

The Lady Big Horns did not get the opportunity to compete in the playoffs this year but they ended their season on a high note with their homecoming win and an overall record of 3-9.

The boys followed the girls onto the turf and dominated the Lions winning 10-3.

Several Big Horns contributed goals including Brester, Smit, junior Max Romney, sophomore Cash Beattie, junior Alex Rager, junior Colter Marino and freshman Finn McRae.

In goal sophomore Sawyer Wolfe logged some great saves for the Big Horns as well.

The victory put the team's record at 5-6-1 for the regular season and got them a third-place finish in the Eastern Class A Conference.

The Big Horns earned the program's first playoff win against Billings Central on Oct. 13 in a playoff play-in game. An early goal by Romney and stifling defense led to a 1-0 victory putting the Bighorns in the quarterfinals in the Class A playoffs.



The Big Horn team walks off the field together after their final game of the season. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

The LPHS boys soccer team stepped out onto their home turf on Oct. 16 for the first high school playoff soccer match ever hosted in Big Sky. The Big Horns battled the Columbia Falls Wildcats in an emotionally charged game ultimately falling 3-0 in a physical match.

Play during most of the first half stayed around midfield, with neither team touting a clear advantage early on. With roughly 11 minutes remaining in the first half, the Wildcats broke through the Big Horns' defense and scored.

As the end of the first half closed in, the Big Horns attacked the ball more aggressively on defense. The half ended with a shot by Columbia Falls that deflected off Romney's head into the hands of Big Horn sophomore goalkeeper Wolfe.

Both teams came out into the second half energized. With about 21 minutes left in the match, Wildcat sophomore forward Kai Golan scored.

Down 2-0 and with 17 minutes of play on the clock, the Big Horns pulled off a few steals to stifle the Wildcats' offense.

With under 10 minutes remaining, the Wildcats scored another goal, securing a steady lead to bury the Big Horns chances late in the match.

"I think today wasn't our day," Harder said. "Regardless of the outcome, I couldn't be more proud of these guys." Harder looked at his players with pride as they packed up their bags on the sidelines, calling them "respectful, good sportsmen."

After the sidelines started to clear and the field was still, the Big Horns players wrapped their arms over each other's shoulders and walked off the field as a team, the scoreboard still lit above them.



Four Lady Big Horn seniors were recognized during a ceremony at half-time. PHOTO BY DAN KELLY





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Professional snowboarders Jeremy Jones, Rafael Pease and Ryan Hudson climb a slope in the Chugach Mountains of Alaska while filming for TGR's "Mountain Revelations." PHOTO COURTESY OF TGR

## TGR presents film highlighting diverse backgrounds

### Q&A: Rafael Pease

BY BELLA BUTLER

GIRDWOOD, ALASKA – In a diversion from the quintessential hype ski movie, Teton Gravity Research will bring their film "Mountain Revelations" to screens across North America this fall. "Mountain Revelations" features professional snowboarders Rafael Pease, Jeremy Jones and Ryan Hudson on a 10-day human powered expedition in the Chugach Mountains of Alaska. The film examines the role the athletes' varied backgrounds has played in leading them to lives in the mountains. "Mountain Revelations," sponsored by Sierra Nevada and Bozeman-based Spark R&D, will screen at the Emerson Center for the Arts in Bozeman on Oct. 28.

Explore Big Sky sat down with Pease to talk about the expedition, the film and the concepts it presents. Pease split his upbringing between Chile and the U.S. and didn't start snowboarding until he was 17. Now at age 27, he's a professional snowboarder, filmmaker and activist based in Chile and Alaska.

*The following responses have been edited for brevity.*

**Explore Big Sky:** "Mountain Revelations" is largely focused on your background as well as Ryan and Jeremy's. Can you tell me a little bit about your upbringing and your roots and how you found a life in the mountains?

**Rafael Pease:** My upbringings weren't really in the mountains whatsoever. Growing up in Chile, you see them every day, they're there. But culturally, in Chile, the mountains aren't really a place where people go to recreate. Unfortunately, it's been something that's been seen more as a corporate resource extraction site. So they've been kind of closed off to the people by the government. So I always saw them as something that's there, you know like a border kind of wall in a way. But as I got older, my mom introduced me to snowboarding... I hated snowboarding at first. It was cold, it was hard, there's snow going into your pants and there's nothing fun about that, even at this point. But I played team sports, almost my entire childhood and there's something liberating about doing something that is somewhat of a sport, but more of an outdoor activity ... It's been about nine years now, and [I've been] pretty much dedicated to the mountains since then. It's been a big life change and I'm pretty happy with it because it's more natural and a connected to nature kind of lifestyle.

**EBS:** The film also follows you three on a 10-day trip in the Chugach Mountains. Can you tell us a little bit more about the structure of that trip and what that looked like for you guys?

**R.P.:** Our trip into the Chugach was pretty late in the year ... pretty much dead summertime. And you're kind of limited to where you can go and what you can do. So obviously TGR is a ski and snowboard predominant production company so we had to go find some snow. With Jeremy's expertise of going to Alaska for the last 30 years, longer than I've been alive, he was like, "Let's go to the Chugach" and I was like, "I don't even know what that is, but I'm down for whatever." So they just ended up picking a zone where there's a ton of glaciers, so you have a kind of different micro environment due to how cold the glaciers keep the area... I'd never met Ryan or Jeremy until this trip [and hadn't been] to Alaska until this trip. So all of this was very new to me—not the film side, I've produced a bunch of films and participated in a lot before and have been on dozens of expeditions, but it was very new, going out with a crew I've never even hung out with off of the mountains... So there's always some anxiety going to these things because you're worried about if everyone's going to get along, or if everything's going to go well. It was a great trip, and I'm excited to see the film of what came out of all of this.

**EBS:** Sometimes in addition to that anxiety that we can experience in the mountains, especially on extended trips, there can be a certain vulnerability or a bond that's created with people or partners on expeditions like that, even when they're new to you. Is that something that you experienced?

**R.P.:** You'll definitely see that Jeremy, myself and Ryan have extremely different personalities ... I'd say I'm a pretty blunt, honest, direct person. I'm so used to being in the mountains all the time that I didn't really feel vulnerable at all really in the situation. It was a very comfortable trip. It was summer weather, the sun never went down, there was not really freezing temperatures. But I'd say there was definitely a point of friendship that grew out of this film, where, you know, we all learned about each other's different perspectives, which I think is conveyed properly in the film.

**EBS:** What are some examples of some of those perspectives?

**R.P.:** [You have] Jeremy, being someone who has been snowboarding for the last 42 years, from an upper-middle class family, and you have Ryan, who comes from a very different background, being a Black man in the U.S., having struggles as a child in California, and then me who, I'm a Hispanic person who doesn't really have any affiliation with the U.S., ... I don't really have any family that was born in this country, and neither was I. So we have such different ways of viewing situations. Ryan grew up facing racism in this country, and I moved into this country where then I started facing those obstacles. Whereas growing up in South America and Chile, you kind of learn to see things as brown people aren't a minority, it's the majority, it's everywhere. And you start seeing different



issues like gender equality, or certain things like that's in the country's culture, issues with the environment. I guess my approach into the film wasn't much of a diversity and equality and inclusivity one, it was more of an environmental approach where you know, we need to kind of start looking at those problems more seriously, because they go side by side with gender equality and human rights. I kind of in a way have had that as a priority, whereas Ryan had his as more of a racial integration one and how there's not enough Black snowboarders in the outdoor industry... And Jeremy is kind of the perspective of being a white, older male snowboarder, whereas snowboarding is pretty much like 90 percent white men. It's just, very different looks at snowboarding and what it is, and people's interaction with environment. There's definitely points of disagreement but it's not because one or the other was wrong, it was just from completely different approaches to what we have experienced.

**EBS:** *What you're getting at here is sort of what pulls "Mountain Revelations" away from a lot of other ski movies that are really designed at the beginning of the season to get us hyped and to get us stoked to get out when the snow starts to fall, whereas this film has a little bit stronger narrative and angle. How was that to be a part of a film that sort of stands on its own in that way?*

**R.P.:** It's nothing that's uncommon for me. I participate in a lot of other films and have created a few that don't even care about the snowboarding shots. There's no dubstep and triple backflips kind of action, it's more so about the cultural aspects, as well as the conservation of people's rights and the environment. So it's kind of refreshing to see a big production company in the U.S. after making 40-plus films, say 'Hey, let's have the first brown and Black person in the film,' because ... it's a good look and because it's about time it's done. So I think it's good... We didn't get the best snow conditions due to the time of the year, but it's also just ... something they say it's like soul shredding, where we're just doing it because we love it.

**EBS:** *What's something that you hope the audience will take away from this film?*

**R.P.:** I hope people go watch the film for the action that might be semi-close minded and be like, "Wow, this is kind of about something else than snowboarding." And I hope that crowd just puts their bigotry aside, and their fear of inclusivity in this country aside, and just lives their life as normally but without being so close minded. I just hope people view it and they're like, "Cool, this is normal. There's nothing here to talk about, it's just what it is." I do think we shouldn't make a big deal about diversity when it comes to racial diversity because just existing as someone who is a minority in a certain space shouldn't be something to celebrate, because it's normal.

**EBS:** *In addition to being an athlete, you're also a filmmaker. Are films and media like this a good tool to normalize that space?*

**R.P.:** I have a production company and there's about 11 of us who work there.



Pease rides a line. PHOTO COURTESY OF TGR

I'd say the minorities are white men, because it's a majority of women and Hispanic men. So I think at the end of the day, it starts from the roots up. It's who is creating these things, it's not who [they're] creating it for ... because if it's a lot of white people creating something for minority groups, then it might be good intentions. But where's the change? The change usually starts in the house. So I think films are a great way to visibilize [sic] what is going on in society. But that's only one step. It's going further and employing people of these talents to do certain things... Just because it's more perspectives, and at the end of the day, and whatever you're creating ends up being that much more powerful.

**EBS:** *Are there any stories or moments from the film that were really stand-out to you, anything that people should be especially excited about?*

**R.P.:** I know Jeremy has had a lot of experience doing [mountain expeditions] for the most of his career, and my entire professional snowboarding career has been exclusively to big mountain expeditions. So I feel way more comfortable going into the mountains... Obviously we're kind of glamping because it's a TGR production. But the reality of going into the mountains and camping and carrying all this weight and all that isn't that easy. In the film, you could clearly see that Ryan struggled a lot with that because he might not have that much experience in comparison to Jeremy and myself... I think it's really cool that it kind of brings it down to the normal viewer where they don't get to go on 10 expeditions a year. So I think it's very down to earth film in that perspective.



Jones (left), Hudson (back) and Pease (front) stand amongst the Chugach. PHOTO COURTESY OF TGR





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# Let's redefine those bucket lists



BY MARJORIE "SLIM" WOODRUFF  
*WRITERS ON THE RANGE*

What did we learn this summer and fall? We learned that people who'd been cooped up, thanks to COVID-19, flocked to our national parks and forests. Once there, many were eager to empty their bucket list of must-do activities in the outdoors.

Consequences ranged from overflowing parking lots, lots of litter and human waste and illegal pets on and off the trails, to campers parking anywhere they wanted, copious graffiti and calls for multiple rescues. At Grand Canyon National Park alone, the summer rescue count exceeded all of last year's. Visitation on public lands increased as much as 50 percent this summer, while at the same time, enforcement budgets had been slashed.

That makes me propose some bucket-list suggestions that might seem like plain old common sense. First, while chasing fulfillment of your list, approach the outdoors like a designated adult and learn what rules apply. Second, make sure you are trackable—and not because you leave a trail of trash or discarded water bottles. Third, do not under any circumstances celebrate your love or anything else by scratching your name on rocks or onto a tree.

Why must I pick up a person's detritus or erase their doodles? One big item on my list is to go hiking without playing housemaid to others.

One young miscreant informed me that she did not know that she was doing anything wrong, everyone else was doing it, and it was a "non-enforceable" law. I suppose if a law enforcement ranger does not observe someone breaking the law it is difficult, though not impossible, to get a conviction. The same can be said for shoplifting, DUIs, or even murder. Somehow that does not make any of those things right.

A big problem with bucket lists is that some goals require a certain level of fitness or expertise, and fulfillment becomes problematic if one lacks either of these qualities. The same people who would quail at running a

marathon believe that hiking Half Dome—16 miles round trip, 4,800 feet of elevation—or climbing Long's Peak—15 miles round trip, 3,825 feet—will be a walk in the park.

Hiking or running rim-to-rim at Grand Canyon is a big goal for lists. This involves starting at one rim or the other and hiking 21 to 24 miles with an elevation change of 11,000 feet. To get the whole "oh wow" reaction from one's peers, the goal is to complete this in one day.

I watched rangers plead with one rim-to-rim woman at the bottom of the canyon to abort her run. She was disoriented and on the verge of blacking out. They offered her a bed in the clinic so she could finish the next day. But, no, she had to finish that day or it would not be marked off her bucket list. She staggered off and had to be rescued two hours later.

How often do we read of climbers on Mount Everest who vanish into the void because they have to summit or die? I do not think the goal of a bucket list is to kick the bucket while accomplishing it.

Checking off items on a list also seems self-limiting. Done with that, what's next? At Volcanoes National Park in Hawaii, I once drove out at sunset to see the lava fall into the sea. Then we hiked to where we could view the active crater. If we'd had a bucket, it needed to get lots bigger.

Maybe a bucket list could be more of a rabbit hole, with each branch leading to another adventure. One of our rangers tells tourists that visiting the Grand Canyon can change one's vacation plans forever. First they need to see it. Then they need to hike down. Then they need to spend the night. Then they hear about another trail. They become explorers in no time.

Instead of "things to do before I kick the bucket," maybe think of "things to do that dump more things into the bucket."

Meanwhile, whatever we do while enjoying public lands and reconnecting with nature, we can show as much respect as we would a friend's backyard—even if our fun is non-enforceable.

*Marjorie "Slim" Woodruff is a contributor to Writers on the Range, [writersontherange.org](http://writersontherange.org), a nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. She is an educator at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.*



At Grand Canyon National Park the 2021 summer rescue count exceeded all of last year's. Author Marjorie "Slim" Woodruff encourages visitors to public lands to change their perspective on bucket list items in the hope that they'll rethink getting themselves into situations where they need to be rescued. PHOTO BY OMER NEZIH GEREK ON UNSPLASH



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## THE NEW WEST

# Bozeman tipis help bring to light Indigenous ties to Yellowstone



An installation of lighted tipis appeared recently in Bozeman on the rise of Peets Hill above town and coincided not only with Indigenous Peoples' Day but also the dedication of the new American Indian Hall at MSU. PHOTO BY HOLLY PIPPEL



BY TODD WILKINSON  
EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

The tipis erected recently on Peets Hill overlooking Bozeman have now come and gone but they made a spectacular impression: They demonstrated how art can be a powerful vehicle for waking people up from our long sleepwalk through modern life.

Down the road, no living person knows for sure when the last wickiup or other form of impermanent lodge—in what is today the geography known as Yellowstone National Park—provided shelter for members of the Tukudeka.

In the latter decades of the 19th century, undocumented observations circulated that in the years following Yellowstone's creation on March 1, 1872, exiled Tukudeka (better known as the Shoshonean Sheepeaters) would break their forced exile, leave their forced confinement on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho, and return to their homeland in and around the Yellowstone Plateau.

Discretely, and though doing so was forbidden by federal regulation, their return was certainly based on the fact that it was the only ground they had ever called home, to live as they always had, carrying on daily existence in the environs of their ancestors and using skills and wayfinding handed down across generations.

This may be why a word like “tourist”—a person who is traveling or visiting a place for pleasure—had never entered into their vocabulary.

“Everyone knows this,” says Shane Doyle, enrolled member of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation. “When connections to a place are deeply ingrained, and your whole way of thinking about the world comes from understanding everything that’s happening there, the connection doesn’t go away. The instinct remains, especially if it was instilled over a long time. You don’t stop wanting to be there. You don’t stop dreaming about it, just because a switch is flipped and you’re told you’re no longer welcome there.”

Doyle is academically trained as an ethno-paleo-archaeologist, and he has written about his own tribe’s connection to Yellowstone. This past summer, a tipi was assembled at Yellowstone’s north entrance right next to the Roosevelt Arch at Gardiner, Montana, to symbolize what park Superintendent Cam Sholly, indigenous leaders like Doyle, conservationists, Mountain Time Arts, and others who carry the hope it represents the dawn for a new way of thinking about Yellowstone as the first national park in the world approaches its 150th anniversary next year.

The Tukudeka, Apsáalooke and at least 25 other indigenous nations share cultural ties with Yellowstone and the terrain around it. A deep record of habitation resides on the shores of Yellowstone Lake, along the Yellowstone River and other bodies of water. Arrowheads made of obsidian quarried in the center of Yellowstone illustrate how the coveted rock was part of a large indigenous trade network, reaching tribes in the Ohio River Basin to the east, the Southwestern deserts, and Pacific Northwest.

Yellowstone, of course, was a game-changer in thinking about how to protect and preserve wildlife and natural wonders, an idea that has been embraced around the globe. In profound ways, the park also has come to represent twin poles of a

contradiction. On the one hand, critics have labeled it an enduring reference point for the atrocities of colonialism and the federally sanctioned policies of genocide, land theft and forced assimilation into the melting pot of the U.S. for indigenous people.

On the other hand, Yellowstone in its own way also stands as a fluid, evolving, radical counterpoint to Manifest Destiny that did—and still does in a 21st century way—seek to exploit, monetize, appropriate, privatize, tame and develop as much of nature as possible.

There is also this: Yellowstone would likely not be a rich uncommon bastion for native wildlife species today had it not been set aside as a nature preserve which, in turn, has anchored the cause of habitat protection on public and private lands around it in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Prior to the installation of tipis in Yellowstone and Bozeman, Mary-Beth Morand, executive director of Mountain Time Arts, along with indigenous leaders, invited Sholly and his team to gather for a broad discussion about Yellowstone’s approaching 150th anniversary.

“We spent hours together during and after dinner discussing possibilities of how to do things together and work better together,” Sholly said. “Engaging each other in formal government to government relations is extremely important. It’s also really important we develop personal relationships that carry on no matter who the leaders in government are.”

Doyle and Sholly agree that it’s impossible to go back in time and alter the course of history playing out since 1872 and even before, but there is an opportunity to change the trajectory of what Yellowstone represents to a diverse country going forward.

“There is much I—and we together—can learn from indigenous wisdom and the relationship that tribes had with the lands of Yellowstone before it was a park,” Sholly says. “I don’t need to point out the fact that when it comes to listening to indigenous voices and respecting the perspectives they bring forward, there’s obvious room for improvement.”

This summer, Sholly had conversations with Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Native American ever to host that presidential cabinet post, while Haaland visited Yellowstone. And the superintendent is eager to host Chuck Sams, the first Native American nominated to oversee the Park Service.

Of the tipi installations, Moran noted that “... artwork may play with a location in many ways. It can expose, question, disrupt, dispute, confirm or celebrate histories and narratives. For me, personally, the tipi juxtaposed against the arch challenges people to reconsider the story of Yellowstone that they may be familiar with.”

Added Doyle: “To have Yellowstone acknowledged as homeland gives Indian people a connection to the park many didn’t know they had. The discussions we need to have aren’t all going to be easy. All of us belong to the land.”

*Todd Wilkinson is the founder of Bozeman-based Mountain Journal and is a correspondent for National Geographic. He authored the book “Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek,” featuring photography by Thomas D. Mangelsen, about famous Jackson Hole grizzly bear 399. Wilkinson’s cover story on renowned actress Glenn Close appears in the summer 2021 edition of Mountain Outlaw magazine.*



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**SECTION 3:**

BUSINESS, FINANCE,  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT,  
DINING AND FUN



2021 Big Sky Halloween lineup pg. 30



Harvest Tomato Sauce pg. 31



Back 40: Bode Miller pg. 34

**Making it in Big Sky: Covered Wagon Ranch**

BY MIRA BRODY

**BIG SKY** – When you stay at Covered Wagon Ranch in Big Sky, you'll be sleeping in authentic, hand-built cabins constructed by original owner Vic Benson Senior back in 1925. The guest ranch has been functioning as a working ranch since then, and welcoming visitors seeking a unique Montana ranch experience ever since.

In 1992, Covered Wagon Ranch was bought from the Bensons by Will King, who developed the business's horse program, and built the Main Lodge, the Rec Hall, the barn and several additional cabins. This allowed them to grow and offer their full range of dude ranch services through their decades in operation.

Today, the ranch is owned by Kurt and Melissa Puckett who operate the ranch alongside their sons Braxton, 7, and Sawyer, 4. Both from ranching families, the couple are devoted to sharing the passion they have for horses and the outdoors with their guests. Explore Big Sky spoke with Melissa about what the ranch offers and looks like today.

*The following responses have been edited for brevity.*

**Explore Big Sky:** Tell me a little about yourself, how did you end up in Big Sky?

**Melissa Puckett:** I am a native Montana girl. I grew up in central Montana. My family has been ranching and farming there since the early 1900s. I moved to Big Sky in 2011 when Kurt (my husband) and I had the opportunity to come in as a partner in Covered Wagon Ranch and bought the previous owners out in 2013.

**EBS:** Tell me a little bit about the history of covered Wagon Ranch? How did you first become involved?

**M.P.:** The ranch was started in 1925 by the Benson Family. Will King came into the picture in 1983 and created a horse program and built our main lodge. Kurt went to work for Will King in 1998 and continuing working through the change of ownership in 2005 and left in 2008. In that time frame Kurt did every aspect of work on the ranch including managing it. After he left, the ranch was missing something—Kurt. Everyone knows he is a big part of the Covered Wagon Ranch and when Debi and JT (the previous owners) decided they wanted to sell it they knew exactly who they wanted to sell it to.

In 2011, we came in as a partner and in 2013 we had the opportunity to buy them out. We are both social and love the outdoors but what we believe has made the



Covered Wagon Ranch is a family-run guest ranch known for its horse services. Here Kurt, Sawyer, Braxton and Melissa Puckett enjoy the lifestyle that Big Sky has to offer. PHOTO COURTESY OF MELISSA PUCKETT

“ This is our ranch, our life and our horses and we get to share it with some amazing people. ”

– Melissa Puckett, Owner, Covered Wagon Ranch

ranch a successful one is that we both grew up in ranching families and horses were a big part of our life. I am both a Certified Equine Massage Therapist and [a pulsed electromagnetic field] Practitioner and Kurt prides himself in horsemanship and training to be the best in our industry. Over the last 10 years, we have built a horse program we are known for worldwide and are recognized for holding our horses at high regard. In addition, we are a family-oriented business and continue to keep the traditions the Benson's, Will, JT and Debi alive.

**EBS:** What kind of services and experience does the ranch offer?

**M.P.:** We are a guest ranch that specializes in horseback riding. We are known for our trail riding and our horses. A lot of the guests that come to the ranch are experienced horsemen. We ride on a lot of different country and run three trucks and trailers every day, which allows you to see a lot more country. We have a lot of avid hikers and fly fishers that visit the ranch too, due to the location.

**EBS:** What is your favorite memory and/or favorite part of running the business?

**M.P.:** We have all walks of life that come to the ranch, people that normally wouldn't interact in the real world, gain life-long friendships at

the ranch and return year after year the same week with the same people. It doesn't matter who they are at home, they all share a same interest, a love for horses and the outdoors.

**EBS:** Is there a story that stands out to you over the years of a guest that made you realize how much you love what you do?

**M.P.:** I would have to say our lifestyle and horses. People come to our ranch from all over the world because of our family and our horses. We have made some incredible horses over the years that we get to share with the public. Our family is such a big part of the ranch and what it is. We are a family owned and run business. This is our ranch, our life and our horses and we get to share it with some amazing people.

**EBS:** Is there anything else that I should know or that you want to tell the Big Sky Community?

**M.P.:** We love this area and the rich heritage the Benson family and the Covered Wagon Ranch has in this canyon. We are incredibly thankful to continue such great traditions to future generations and the public.

**EBS:** What is the best business advice you have ever received?

**M.P.:** Love what you do and you will be successful in doing it.

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# Enjoying the Ride: What’s so spooky about Halloween anyway?



BY BENJAMIN SPIKER  
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

As the leaves change colors and the air turns crisp, my mind turns to the season of holidays, starting with the scariest of them all, Halloween! While my kids excitedly pick out their costumes and dreaming of bags of candy, I think about what scares me most as a financial professional: a poor performing stock market season!

Since 1928, the month of September is historically the worst month of the year for stocks, and for 2021 this trend was no different. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell -3.5 percent, the S&P 500 was down -3.9 percent and the Nasdaq Composite fell -4.6 percent.

So what, you may be saying. That doesn't seem so bad given the kind of returns the markets have been providing the past couple of years. Well, let's keep in mind, some pretty nasty sell-offs began in September in the relatively recent past as well, including Black Wednesday on Sept. 16, 1992, the September 2001 sell-off due to 9/11, and even 2008 as the great financial crisis was ushered in.

But what about October? As we inch toward Halloween, will we get a trick or a treat? Should we be scared of what's to come?

Historically, some pretty big corrections have happened in October. The Bank Panic of 1907, the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and Black Monday of 1987 were all devastating market events in the short term that occurred in October. Ghosts and goblins are enough to cause a fright this month—no need to add market woes on top of that.

Historical trends would tell us the worst may be behind us. Over the years, the month of October has been a middling performing month with an average annual return of +.58 percent over the past 40 years. While nothing to write home about, this compares to the

mean September monthly performance of -.77 percent. In fact, over the past 20 years of trading, the three best months to begin investing initially were April, November, and, you guessed it, October.

There are a lot of reasons this could have been the case. Maybe it's been the relative softness investors could have bought into following a weak September market; perhaps it's the inventory build-up by retailers leading to the typically robust holiday retail season; or some economists have even pointed to the summer commodities harvest season as a potential catalyst.

Regardless of these short-term, admittedly compelling trends in the marketplace, we at Shore to Summit Wealth Management believe in always investing with a long-term perspective. A well-diversified, disciplined investment plan and execution strategy developed with the assistance of your financial advisor will always help to take the fear out of investing and allow you to continue to Enjoy Your Ride...even in the spookiest of times!

*Benjamin D. Spiker is the Co-Founder and Managing Director of Shore to Summit Wealth Management. His wealth management career spans more than 22 years and he currently works and lives in Annapolis, MD with his wife, two sons and daughter.*

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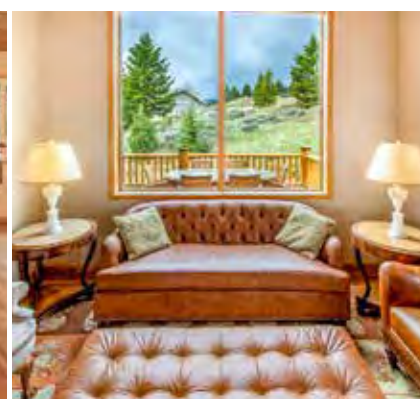
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# BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, Oct. 22 – Thursday, Nov. 4

*If your event falls between Nov. 5 and Nov. 18, please submit it by Oct. 27 by emailing [media@outlaw.partners](mailto:media@outlaw.partners)*

## Friday, Oct. 22

### Taste of Montana

ACRE Kitchen, 6 p.m.

### Haunted Mountain Theater

Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

### Live Music: Luke Dowler

Tips Up, 9 p.m.

## Saturday, Oct. 23

### 2021 Great Pumpkin Giveaway

Big Sky Town Center, 12 p.m.

### Haunted Mountain Theater

Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

### Live Music: Nella

Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, 7 p.m.

## Sunday, Oct. 24

### Season's Breathings

Santosha Wellness Center, 5 p.m.

## Tuesday, Oct. 26

### Inaugural Big Sky CommUNITY Forum

The Wilson Hotel, 4:30 p.m.

### Live Music: Caleb Klauder and Reeb Willms

The Wilson Hotel, 7 p.m.

## Thursday, Oct. 28

Big Sky Serenity Seekers Al-Anon meeting

All Saints Chapel, 4 p.m.

### Live Music: Cole Thorne

Tips Up, 9pm

## Friday, Oct. 29

Haunted Peaks Kickoff Party

Tips Up, 9 p.m.

### Haunted Mountain Theater

Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

## Saturday, Oct. 30

### Second Annual Run to the Pub

Moving Mountains, 1 p.m.

### Haunted House

Haas Builders, 3 p.m.

### Haunted Peaks Concert Pub Crawl: Featuring Shakewell

Town Center & Tips Up, 6 p.m.

### Haunted Mountain Theater

Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

## Sunday, Oct. 31

### Pumpkin King and Queen Carving Competition

Fire Pit Park, 12 p.m.

### Mini Monster Mash

Fire Pit Park, 1 p.m.

### Yappy Hour

Fire Pit Park, 2 p.m.

### Haunted Mountain Theater

Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

## Tuesday, Nov. 2

### Big Sky Serenity Seekers Al-Anon meeting

All Saints Chapel at 4 p.m.

## Wednesday, Nov. 3

### Eggs & Issues: Joint County Commission Meeting

The Wilson Hotel, 8:30 a.m.

## Featured event: Big Sky CommUNITY Forum

The Inaugural Big Sky CommUNITY Forum will take place at the Wilson Hotel on Tuesday, Oct. 26. The Big Sky Resort Area District will be hosting this interactive forum as a place for the public to engage with community organizations and learn more about the work they do. The forum will discuss a variety of themes ranging from public health and safety, education and childcare, housing and planning, recreation and conservation, economic development and more.

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# 2021 Big Sky Halloween Lineup

BY TUCKER HARRIS

Put on your best costumes and get ready for a haunted Halloween full of live music, contests and activities for all ages. Big Sky Town Center is bringing the spookiest events to Big Sky for three days of Halloween celebrations.

Due to the high transmission rate of COVID-19 in Gallatin County, many events will be scaled back or virtual. Masking, social distancing, and sanitizing are highly recommended when attending any indoor events or larger gatherings.

See below for the full 2021 Halloween Lineup.



## GET SPOOKY ALL WEEKEND LONG OCT. 29-31

### Haunted Peaks Window Display Competition

Store fronts will partake in Big Sky's tradition of decorating Town Center businesses' windows in the spookiest fashion. In addition to Town Center's own judges, there will be a people's choice winner. Stop in to any of the participating businesses and cast your vote at the ballot box by 10 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 30. The best decorations will be announced on Halloween, Sunday, Oct. 31.

### 2021 Haunted Peaks Geocache Mystery

Solve the three-day haunted mystery in the Haunted Peaks Geocache Mystery event. Follow the clues around town with your phone to win prizes all weekend long. Sign your team up by messaging Big Sky Town Center on Facebook or Instagram.

### Virtual Horror Film Festival

Stay at home next to your lit jack-o-lantern and enjoy three days of a curated horror film watchlist fit for all ages. Films will be curated by local cinephile horror fanatics and will include both family friendly and more mature content.

## SATURDAY OCT. 23

### Great Pumpkin Giveaway

Fire Pit Park | 12-4 p.m.

Get your pumpkins at the Great Pumpkin Giveaway this year while giving back to the Big Sky Community Food Bank. Donate five cans for your prized pumpkin from the Fire Pit Park. Each family will be limited to three pumpkins.

## FRIDAY OCT. 29

### Haunted Peaks Kickoff Party

Tips Up | 9 p.m.

Haunted beats by local legends DJ Jenn-N-Juice and TAKEaCHANCE will start the weekend at the Haunted Peaks Kickoff. Prizes will be awarded to the best costume.



## SATURDAY, OCT. 30

### 2nd annual Run to the Pub

Moving Mountains | 1pm

Wear your costume and brave a 5k of terror with Halloween-themed challenges. Runners will be shuttled to the golf course to start the race. After the race, enjoy live music, food and beverages, and a costume contest at Beehive Basin Brewery starting at 2 p.m. Register online in advance.

### Haunted House

Haas Builders, 223 Town Center Ave. | 3-9 p.m.

Enter if you dare. The spine-tingling haunted house hosted by Haas Builders and benefitting Big Sky Discovery Academy will feature poltergeists, vampires, werewolves, and more. This event is donation-based with concessions pre- and post-haunted house.

### Haunted Peaks Concert Pub Crawl: Featuring Shakewell

Town Center & Tips Up | 6-11 p.m.

Join the Haunted Peaks Concert Pub Crawl with local businesses in the Town Center featuring live music by local artists and spooky specials. Presented by Lone Mountain Land Company and Big Sky Real Estate Co., the final stop will be at Tips Up with a concert headlined by Shakewell, a six-piece funk, neo-soul and rock 'n' roll band.

## SUNDAY, OCT 31

### Pumpkin King and Queen Carving Competition

Fire Pit Park | 12-1 p.m.

Bring your carved pumpkins with battery-operated lights to the Fire Pit Park for the King and Queen Pumpkin Carving Competition. Judges will pick the best pumpkins and crown the Pumpkin King and Queen at 1 p.m. Winners will receive prize packs from local Big Sky businesses.

### Mini Monster Mash

Fire Pit Park | 1-2 p.m.

Come gather at Fire Pit Park for the Mini Monster Mash costume contest and trick or treat. There will be fun prizes, candy bags ready for pick-up and a kid-friendly Halloween playlist for kids to dance around the fire pit to while donning their costumes.

### Yappy Hour

Fire Pit Park | 2-4 p.m.

Dress your pooch up in their favorite Halloween costume and join The Rocks Tasting Room for a happy hour and treats to help raise awareness for RUFF Montana, a local nonprofit that provides vital veterinary care to the underserved members of our community. Celebrity judges will give out prizes for the best pup costumes.







## Harvest Tomato Sauce

BY BELLA BUTLER

**BIG SKY** – As October fades to November and the leaves on the aspens twinkle golden as they dance in the autumn wind, Montana soil offers its final yield before frost puts the crops to bed.

In the produce bowl on my counter, the vibrant colors of fall's last harvest tempt me to dig in right away, but memories of cold, dark winter nights remind me that I can make these last morsels of summer go further than my dinner plate tonight. Tomatoes from my grandma's garden are one of my favorite summer treats, and one of the best ways to save them for later is to cook them into a rich sauce.

Inspired by Marcella Hazan's famous and simple recipe, this versatile tomato sauce takes only a few ingredients and can be used for a number of things when it's time to unfreeze in January. My favorite part about it is that the recipe is truly a guide; a template to be used as a starting point. Feel free to add in other harvest flavors like a spicy pepper or seasonal herbs to make it your own.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups of fresh diced tomatoes and their juices
- 1 cup of chopped onions, size to preference
- ½ tablespoon of olive oil
- 3-4 fresh thyme sprigs
- 2 tablespoons of finely chopped fresh rosemary
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon of chicken bouillon
- 2 teaspoons of herbs de Provence

### Method

1. Heat a medium stock pot and add olive oil.
2. Add tomatoes and onions to the pot, stir and let cook covered on medium heat for 15 minutes.
3. Stir some more, breaking down any large pieces of tomato. Add fresh and dried herbs, bouillon paste and salt and pepper. Stir again and let simmer on medium-low heat for 20 more minutes. Stir occasionally and add more salt and pepper as needed.
4. Remove thyme sprigs and let cool.
5. Add sauce to container (I use glass mason jars), seal and freeze. When you're ready to eat, defrost on medium-low heat in stock pot, adding water as needed.

*Chef's tip: Frequent tasting is key (and fun). Don't be afraid to adjust based on taste.*



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# AMUSE-BOUCHE

*Amuse-bouche refers to an appetizer, and by French translation means, "to entertain the mouth." It offers a glimpse into what you should expect from a meal. Also it's free, compliments of the chef.*

## If a kitchen were a band



BY SCOTT MECHURA  
EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

Hearing the accolades continue to trickle in over the late Charlie Watts of the Rolling Stones, I started thinking about what a contribution he made to what I believe to be the greatest rock band of all time. From his first permanent appearance in 1963, Charlie was unquestionably an integral part of the Rolling Stones.

Eating for enjoyment is almost as old as music, and both intertwine with our daily lives more than people realize. Just how similar are they? The chef in me must ask: How else do bands equate to kitchens?

The cooks and chef come together for a successful night of service, just as the band comes together for a great record or concert. Surely there are some similarities.

**Drummer.** In most bands, the drummer is the one who controls the tempo. They quite literally control the timing of the song and of the night. Though they are not necessarily in the front, the drummer is always in the center of the stage. The beat of the drums is a giant metronome that others can be guided by.

**The broiler cook** is the backbone in any restaurant that has one, depending on the concept. They control the cooking of all steaks and chops. They know how to cook a multitude of cuts of beef, lamb, pork and wild game from rare to well done. They are controlling the timing of the other cooks so that their dishes all come up at the same time. This is not an easy thing to maintain all night long on a busy night. And think of the symbols as perfectly executed grill marks; a beautiful little accent that puts a finer point on something already great. In other words, the broiler cook drives the bus.

**Lead guitar.** Usually with nimble fingers and large personalities, the lead guitar is an identifying sound to a band. They often come with their own solos and require very fast hands and fingers.

The finesse of a strong sauté cook is evident in their orchestration of their pan movement and intricate plating of their dishes. More nuances than a broiler cook, their plates are often the stand-out presentations, much like the lead guitarist.

**Piano/keyboard.** In this kitchen band, the pianist or keyboard player parallels the pastry chef. You don't always think about what they bring to a band when there is a strong lead guitar or drummer. But when they make themselves known or have a key role in the overall sound of the band, they're an attention grabber.

Similarly, nothing says the end of a fantastic meal quite like a dessert from a talented, experienced pastry chef that you couldn't even come close to replicating at home.

**Bass.** The essential but less distinguishable background sound of the kitchen, an experienced utility line cook is like a bass player; the journeyman in some cases. They're up there right next to the singer and guitar players, but don't always stand out or have a noticeably audible roll. But they contribute heavily to the overall sound.

An experienced line cook that has worked every station in several restaurants for years is the saving grace of a busy night. They know enough about the other stations that they can flow and adapt to the others or take charge when it looks like there might be a misstep or a storm the kitchen has to weather.

**Road crew.** In Jackson Browne's song "The Load-Out/Stay," he sings about the unsung rock stars who are the first to arrive and the last to leave. The road crew does a lot of heavy lifting, literally and figuratively, for the band. There is no glamour, there are no praises from the fans. There's just hard work and late nights.

While the dishwashers are not the first to arrive, they are definitely the last ones to leave. Without them, there would be no service or wonderful guest experience.

**Lead singer.** The front man or woman who is oftentimes the face of the band. Their voice is the single most distinguishable aspect of the band in most cases. It sets them apart from other bands. And they often go on to a solo career or start their own bands.

The chef is usually the voice of the restaurant, meaning it is their food that becomes the identity of everyone else. They write the menu as the singer sings the lyrics. And sometimes, the chef moves on to start their own restaurant.

*Scott Mechura has spent a life in the hospitality industry. He is an executive chef, former certified beer judge and currently the multi-concept culinary director for a Bozeman based restaurant group.*

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BY KWAME DAWES

Bruce Willard's poem, "Song Sparrow", captures with such intimacy, the interruption of the comforting rituals of time: seasons changing, children growing older, water under the bridge, the world continuing its march. Here, in the midst of this, our long and tumultuous pandemic "season", I am struck by how familiar the breathlessness that Willard describes feels. As with the best poems, the familiarity is formed through empathy—something that poetry teaches us, again and again.

# Song Sparrow

BY BRUCE WILLARD

That summer we opened the lake cottage,  
prehistoric sound of loons before us,  
decades of children at our back,  
familiar sound of water  
under the porch eaves.

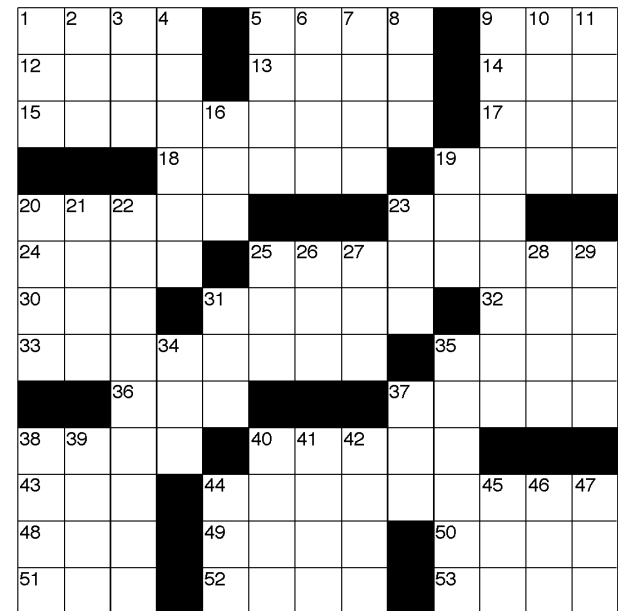
A song sparrow  
hit the window  
just as summer began.

You held it in your hand  
bent over, unable to breathe  
another year, working  
your fingers  
under its feathers and bone.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

<p><b>ACROSS</b></p> <p>1 Gr. pastoral poet</p> <p>5 Hand (Ital.)</p> <p>9 Highway (abbr.)</p> <p>12 Pointed (pref.)</p> <p>13 Venezuelan copper center</p> <p>14 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)</p> <p>15 Finger cymbals</p> <p>17 Operated</p> <p>18 David's commander</p> <p>19 Care for</p> <p>20 Thin (pref.)</p> <p>23 Air-to-air missile (abbr.)</p> <p>24 To be (Fr.)</p> <p>25 Weir (2 words)</p> <p>30 Orkneys inlet</p> <p>31 Anecdotes</p> <p>32 Edible root</p> <p>33 Lure</p> <p>35 Afr. gazelle</p> <p>36 At the age of</p>	<p>(Lat.)</p> <p>37 Santa's reindeer</p> <p>38 Void</p> <p>40 More</p> <p>43 Soft drink</p> <p>44 4th incarnation of Vishnu</p> <p>48 Fastener</p> <p>49 Sister of Ares</p> <p>50 Roll up</p> <p>51 Outer (pref.)</p> <p>52 Fair</p> <p>Employment Practices Act (abbr.)</p> <p>53 Young Men's Hebrew Assn. (abbr.)</p>	<p><b>ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>G</td><td>E</td><td>A</td><td>T</td><td>C</td><td>O</td><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>W</td><td>H</td><td>O</td></tr> <tr><td>O</td><td>A</td><td>T</td><td>H</td><td>A</td><td>K</td><td>E</td><td>E</td><td>E</td><td>A</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>T</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>P</td><td>A</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>R</td><td>E</td><td>D</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>O</td><td>B</td><td>O</td><td>S</td><td>L</td><td>U</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>S</td><td>W</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>M</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>D</td><td>A</td><td>P</td><td>D</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>R</td><td>E</td><td>C</td><td>A</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>M</td><td>O</td><td>K</td><td>L</td><td>A</td><td>C</td><td>R</td><td>U</td><td>G</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>E</td><td>S</td><td>A</td><td>E</td><td>T</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>L</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>N</td><td>O</td><td>M</td><td>L</td><td>O</td><td>C</td><td>A</td><td>L</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>G</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td>A</td><td>A</td><td>A</td><td>A</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>A</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>E</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>A</td><td>L</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>I</td><td>R</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>S</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>M</td><td>O</td><td>L</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>D</td></tr> </table>	G	E	A	T	C	O	S	M	W	H	O	O	A	T	H	A	K	E	E	E	A	N	P	T	E	R	P	A	I	D	R	E	D			O	B	O	S	L	U	I	C	E	A	N	S	W	E	R	M	A	B			D	A	P	D	A	B	R	E	C	A	P	A	M	O	K	L	A	C	R	U	G	A	K	E	R	E	S	A	E	T	B	A	L			N	O	M	L	O	C	A	L	E	A	N	G	O	R	A	A	A	A			S	A	I	D	I	C	E	B	A	A	L	C	I	D	I	R	A	N	A	N	S	E	I	D	E	D	E	M	O	L	A	N	D
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<p><b>DOWN</b></p> <p>1 Cistern</p> <p>2 Amazon tributary</p> <p>3 Alternatives</p> <p>4 Write music</p>	<p>5 Polynesian spirit</p> <p>6 War god</p> <p>7 Mark (Lat.)</p> <p>8 Org. of Amer. States (abbr.)</p> <p>9 Oda (2 words)</p> <p>10 Women's Army Aux. Corps</p>	<p>(abbr.)</p> <p>11 Pull abruptly</p> <p>16 Love (Lat.)</p> <p>19 Deserter</p> <p>20 Son of Leah</p> <p>21 Jacket</p> <p>22 Rife</p> <p>23 Exclamations of delight</p> <p>25 Cigarette: Brit. slang</p> <p>26 Unkind</p> <p>27 Witness</p> <p>28 Longing</p> <p>29 Fraction</p> <p>31 Bird</p> <p>34 Moray</p> <p>35 Vary</p> <p>37 Fr. pronoun</p> <p>38 Nucha</p> <p>39 N. Caucasian language</p> <p>40 Berne's river</p> <p>41 Lose liquid</p> <p>42 Hindu servant</p> <p>44 Shipshaped clock</p> <p>45 Chrysanthemu</p> <p>46 Her Royal Highness (abbr.)</p> <p>47 Axilla</p>
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# Corner Quote



“Halloween wraps fear in innocence, as though it were a slightly sour sweet. Let terror, then, be turned into a treat...”

– *Nicholas Gordon*

# BIG SKY BEATS



## Spooky Season

BY TUCKER HARRIS

Spooky season is upon us. Jack-o-lanterns glow on front door steps, parents are stocking up on Reese's seasonal Halloween-shaped candy, and costumes are being imagined, stitched and ordered in preparation for Halloween weekend. Whether you need some tunes to blast on the speaker as you make your way from door to door, during your Halloween party with friends or in the shower to get you into the spooky spirit, Big Sky Beats has you covered with the best haunted songs.



1. "Monster Mash" by Bobby "Boris" Pickett, The Crypt-Kickers
2. "Psycho Killer" by Talking Heads
3. "She Wolf" by Shakira
4. "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" by The Charlie Daniels Band
5. "Thriller" by Michael Jackson
6. "Haunted" by Beyoncé
7. "bury a friend" by Billie Eilish
8. "Hells Bells" by AC/DC
9. "Hocus Pocus: I Put A Spell On You" by Geek Music
10. "Ghostbusters" by Ray Parker Jr.
11. "Superstition" by Stevie Wonder
12. "Monster" by Lady Gaga
13. "Black Widow" by Iggy Azalea, Rita Ora
14. "Halloween Theme – Main Title" by John Carpenter
15. "Season of the Witch" by Donovan



# BACK40

For Explore Big Sky, the Back 40 is a resource: a place where we can delve into subjects and ask experts to share their knowledge. Here, we highlight stories from our flagship sister publication Mountain Outlaw magazine.

**Noun:** wild or rough terrain adjacent to a developed area **Origin:** shortened form of “back 40 acres”



Bode Miller hits the gas while running gates in Portillo, Chile, in 2016. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOMBER SKI

## After the Last Gate

### Featured Outlaw: Bode Miller

BY DOUG HARE

It's mid-October and Bode Miller answers the door barefoot, wearing board shorts and a flannel. Inviting us into his Orange County, California, home he takes a moment to prepare for our interview. His wife Morgan is making scrambled eggs. She's eating for three on this sunny morning with twins due in less than a month, while her youngest son Easton Vaughn Rek is flanking her side in only a diaper.

Miller reemerges: “You should wait until after the eggs are cooked to add salt,” he suggests to Morgan. Bode Miller isn't one to hold back an opinion when he thinks he's right. And he doesn't peddle in mediocrity. Never has.

Growing up outside of Easton, New Hampshire, his competitive nature shown through early on, and not just on the slopes of nearby Cannon Mountain. He credits much of his success, as the most decorated American male alpine ski racer of all time, to the lessons he learned growing up in summer camps at the Tamarack Tennis Club, which his grandparents started in 1962.

Various media articles have mentioned Miller's cross-training in a multitude of sports, but those pursuits were always downplayed, he says.

“Tennis was the primary structured activity,” Miller said from his shaded front porch. “But there was soccer, capture the flag, ping-pong, volleyball, frisbee, football, you name it.” The exposure as a camper with kids from around the world was formative in what you could describe as his cosmopolitan views rooted in the libertarian soil he grew up on, usually barefoot in the woods when he wasn't on a soccer pitch, tennis court or ski slope. It would be this eclectic, rogue perspective that he would refine during his travels in pursuit of the two overall World Cup titles and six Olympic medals he lays claim to.

While the narrative of Bode Miller as a renegade ski racer, some kind of undisciplined rebel bucking the system at every turn, gained traction and snowballed in media coverage, that depiction was never the most accurate portrayal of his true nature behind the piercing blue eyes and provocative comments. He wasn't so much obstinate and contrarian as he was uncompromising in the pursuit of his goals, unwilling to conform and unorthodox in his methods to achieve greatness.

“I think I was aware of that at a young age,” said Miller, now 42. “I didn't want to look back on my career and blame other people for why I wasn't successful. So at the end of the day I had to look more critically at what people were proposing to me. Unfortunately most of the coaches, no knock against them ... they didn't have the right answers for me.

“When you're trying to talk about being the best in the world, it's like anything—art, or music or acting—you can have people that stimulate certain thought processes but ... in the end it has to be that individual that does it. You can't just follow a template and become the best.”

A young Miller discovered that at tennis camp and on the ski hill competing against older, more talented kids. He knew he had to make adjustments and play to his strengths to achieve the level of excellence that would satisfy him. The impressive results of his lengthy ski racing career have been well chronicled and speak for themselves. “I'd put my career, very subjectively, up against anyone in the history of the sport and I think I had a better time doing it than anyone else.”

In order to succeed on the world ski stage, Bode innovated a racing technique that was uniquely matched to his athletic strengths and fearless style. As he tells it, at his prime in his best races he was far from flawless but could correct mistakes and adapt in real time, something that he could only practice going full speed—something that inherently didn't work



out every time, like his last race in 2015 at Beaver Creek, Colorado, when he severed his hamstring with his own ski. He retired from racing in 2017, briefly returning as an NBC commentator during the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

The six-time Olympian's name might appear less frequently in the sports news nowadays, but last year the Millers made nationwide news after losing their daughter Emmy in a tragic drowning accident. Asked about grief, he pauses. "No one's getting out of this alive. Loss, grief, suffering and pain are all part of it. It doesn't really discriminate between class or wealth. There's nothing right about what your natural feelings are after losing a child. You have to be able to get to the point of accepting the new normal."

Last Nov. 8, Morgan gave birth to healthy, twin baby boys, delivering them at their SoCal home with the help of her husband and his mother.

While their life is a far cry from where Bode Miller grew up, a cabin with no running water or electricity nestled in the woods of the Live-Free-or-Die state, he tries to keep the same ethos under which he was raised. "Morgan and I try to be pretty hands-off in a lots of ways ... you can't remove obstacles from their path because those are the times they learn most effectively and with the least amount of risk." Even though his commitment to raising his now five children is his biggest priority in retirement from alpine racing, Miller's ambitions are these days redirected into the business world.

"At the end of ski racing career, you usually go find a job and get one fast," Miller said. "There's usually not a lot of money in your bank account after a ski racing career."

These days, Miller's skillset, connections and competitive drive align nicely with what is known as 'disruptive entrepreneurship,' a way for small companies to innovate and succeed where larger, more established brands have blind spots or inefficiencies.

In the fall of 2015, Miller became an equity partner and chief innovation officer for Aztech Mountain, a performance ski apparel company based in Aspen, Colorado and New York City. That same year, he announced his



Miller on location in Jochberg, Austria. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOMBER SKI

partnership with Bomber skis, hoping to offer to the public skis of the caliber he rode on tour. "Luckily, I'm at the point where I can pick and choose who I partner with."

Miller last summer announced his partnership with Moonlight Basin and Spanish Peaks Mountain Club, two communities that flank Lone Mountain in the burgeoning hamlet of Big Sky, Montana, where he plans to live for most of the winter. No stranger to southwest Montana, Miller visited this region often when his sister attended Montana State University in the late '90s, traveling to Yellowstone National Park and skiing Big Sky Resort when he could. For Miller, Big Sky has "that culture—the terrain is gnarly and rugged, the people are hearty and the community is warm and welcoming."

His plans to help develop the mountain culture, facilities and amenities around his new hometown are in the earliest phases, but he doesn't rule out the possibility of starting his own ski academy. Then he rattles off five ways that the operations surrounding his new home mountain could improve—already racing in entrepreneurial mode.

Scot Schmidt, godfather of extreme skiing and now ambassador at the Yellowstone Club just outside of Big Sky, admires Miller's ski career and looks forward to his next chapter. "In that all-or-nothing discipline that Bode was in, he was the real deal; a true hero," Schmidt said. "I have a lot of respect for somebody who figures out that something isn't working for him, taking control of the situation ... and becoming a champion."

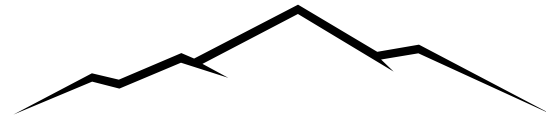
There are no pre-race inspections in life; no way of knowing what's around the next corner. If anything, Bode Miller taught us you can catch an edge and still regain composure. Miller was an athlete who gambled that perseverance and resilience would eventually pay off. "I knew that since I was 11," he says. "I wasn't training to develop skiing muscles, I was training to survive the crashes." Thankfully, sport can teach us lessons that transcend the physical realm, helping us navigate even the most difficult sections of the course.

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Miller at the annual Turtle Ridge Foundation's BodeFest fundraiser for youth adaptive sports at Cannon Mountain, New Hampshire, in April 2019. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOMBER SKI





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