

BEST OF BIG SKY 2021

BEST OF
BIG SKY
2021

Best Business



1st: Big Sky Build

John Seelye came out to Big Sky after college with visions of riding the new Lone Peak Tram to the top of Lone Mountain. Like many, he fell in love with the community and has since instated the same passion for skiing that drove him out here into his business, Big Sky Build. What began in 1997 as Big Sky Woodwork & Design has evolved over decades into a company that specializes in all phases of the building process.

"I'm really excited for everyone in the company to receive this award, because it really does go to them," Seelye said. "It's a spectacular honor. This town is comprised of so many phenomenal businesses, to be recognized in Best of Big Sky 2021 is a testament to the hard work of the men and women of Big Sky Build and it's also a testament to everyone who works on and around our projects. All I can say is thank you to everyone."

bigskybuild.com

2nd: Ace Hardware

Driving into Big Sky, one of the first businesses you'll see is Ace Hardware. Locally owned and operated by Kevin Barton, the hardware store is known for its friendly, red vested employees, a thorough inventory of necessities and open doors no matter how harsh the winter weather gets.

acebigskytools.com

3rd: Two Pines Properties

Two Pines Properties is owned by Alex and Wes Hoecker who have—like many—fallen in love with Big Sky and are set on making the area feel like home to all who stay at one of their properties.

twopinesvacationrentals.com



Editor's Pick: Big Sky Post Office

As the community grows, so does its need to receive mail. Battling a tight space and growing demand, post office staff consistently go out of their way to make sure that everything from cross-continental correspondence, gifts from home, prescription refills and voter ballots get where they need to go.

postallocations.com/mt/big-sky/big-sky

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Most Sustainable/Green Organization



1st: Gallatin River Task Force

In 2000, a group of passionate community members, concerned about the release of treated wastewater pouring into their beloved Gallatin River, formed the Gallatin River Task Force. The nonprofit has since been advocating for one of Big Sky's crown jewels by monitoring the Upper Gallatin River Watershed, employing water conservation efforts and a water management forum that plans for the area's growth and development.

"We're honored by the support and we see this as a reflection of the need to protect and save the Gallatin in our community especially after the drought this summer and increasing threats to the river and water availability," said Chief Executive and Science Officer, Kristen Gardiner.

gallatinrivertaskforce.org

2nd: Recycling Center

The Recycling Center is the perfect example of the power of team spirit in Big Sky. After the center struggled to find a home in 2015, local business owner John Haas donated the land, and with the help of a list of other community members, made the center a reality so Big Sky continues to have a place to reduce, reuse and recycle.

facebook.com/bigskyrecyclingcenter/

3rd: Big Sky SNO

If you've used the water fountains or new recycling and compost bins around Big Sky, you're aware of the work that the Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization does for the community. The nonprofit works to identify ways to reduce reuse and recycle in everyday life so we can remain sustainable even while we grow.

bigskysno.org

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Community Member of the Year



1st: Al Malinowski

If you pass Al Malinowski on the street, he's sure to give you a friendly smile and a wave without fail. Known by many, Malinowski has been a beloved member of the Big Sky community since moving to town nearly three decades ago.

Malinowski has served many roles in the community. With more than 20 years of coaching athletics at the local school, Malinowski is fondly known by many athletes, parents and Big Horns and Miners fans as Coach Al.

Since 2001, Malinowski has also operated the Big Sky Post Office LLC, ensuring that Big Sky has never been without critical postal service.

The picture of civic engagement, Malinowski has also served Big Sky in leadership positions on several boards, including the Big Sky Resort Area District board as well as the Big Sky Community Organization board.

"To be chosen by the Big Sky community is quite a humbling experience for me," Malinowski said, "so I can't say enough about how proud I am to be able to be included in a list picked by the people here."

2nd: Lindsie Hurlbut

It's safe to say most everyone in Big Sky has bitten into a delicious Lindsie Hurlbut creation. A longtime local, Hurlbut has most recently revolutionized the food program at the Big Sky School District, making sure that every student has access to quality, local meals.

3rd: Heather Morris

Through influential organizations like Camp Moonlight and the Moonlight Community Foundation, Heather Morris has had a deep impact on many lives in Big Sky.



Editor's Pick: Andy Dreisbach

Humorous and unapologetic, Andy Dreisbach has Big Sky stories to put all others to rest. An intrepid skier, entrepreneur and family guy, Dreisbach is an active member of Gallatin County Sheriff Search and Rescue Big Sky Section and though too humble to admit it, is considered a true Big Sky local by many.

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Restaurant



1st: Blue Buddha Sushi Lounge

If you feel like you're having déjà vu, seeing Blue Buddha at the top of Best Restaurant again, you're not wrong—the Town Center dinner joint known for its eclectic sushi rolls and killer cocktails won Best Restaurant last year as well. And for good reason, Troy “Twist” Thompson, founder and owner, learned sushi rolling under the legendary Andy Matsuda in Los Angeles before opening Blue Buddha restaurants in Page, Arizona, and then Big Sky in 2019. The Drunken Monk, Blue Buddha's late night bar and eatery, is open seven days a week now for your nighttime cravings. Blue Buddha is also offering private Omakase dinners in their Omakase room or in the comfort of your own home.

“It feels like an honor more than anything else,” Thompson said of their Best of Big Sky win. “We're honored to be here and really excited to be a part of the community. Part of this kick ass ski town!”

bigskybluebuddha.com

2nd: Olive B's

Olive B's is no stranger to the Best of Big Sky—victors in the Best Restaurant category for the last couple years, this reliable eatery has a loyal patronage that keeps coming back for a well-crafted, delicious menu.

olivebsbigsky.com

3rd: Riverhouse BBQ & Events

The aptly-named Riverhouse BBQ & Events is known for its delicious BBQ, spectacular view of the Gallatin River and reliable atmosphere. Whether you've been snowmobiling, fishing, skiing or hiking, the Riverhouse has stood as a recreationist's and local's sanctuary since owners Greg "Carnie" Lisk and Kyle Wisniewski opened their doors in 2013 with a fiery passion for dry-rubbed meats, craft beer and a good time.

riverhousebbq.com

Editor's Pick: Lotus Pad Asian Cuisine

When you visit Lotus Pad, you'll often see chef and owner Alex Omania there as well, stirring up delicious Asian cuisine. The Town Center staple focuses on quality food and an exceptional culinary experience, not to mention some of the best stir fried rice you'll ever have.

lotuspad.net



**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Local Meal Deal



1st: Riverhouse BBQ & Events

Fried cheese curds, soft pretzel sticks with piping hot cheese sauce, sweet potato fries and smoked brisket that falls off your fork and into your macaroni and cheese—whatever your BBQ fantasies, the Riverhouse BBQ & Events can fulfill and exceed them, which is why they snagged the top position of this year's Best Local Meal Deal.

“The Riverhouse thanks everybody, especially the locals, for making this possible and thanks for voting for us and come down to see us,” Greg "Carnie" Lisk said, who owns the Riverhouse alongside Kyle Wisniewski. “We couldn't have done it without our employees.”

riverhousebbq.com

2nd: Mi Pueblito Taco Bus

If you pull into Ace Hardware's parking lot to snag a quick beef side burrito for lunch, you'll almost always be met with a line streaming from the side of the recognizable white bus. The Mi Pueblito Taco Bus provides hungry recreationists and workers of Big Sky with delicious, filling and authentic Mexican food from the school bus' window, rain or shine.

ordermipueblitotacobus.com

3rd: Hungry Moose Market & Deli

A trip to the Hungry Moose Market & Deli very often takes longer than you expected, and that's because there's always a friendly face behind the counter to stop and chat with. Whether stocking up on groceries, selecting a wine for your next dinner event or grabbing a sandwich from their deli for lunch, the Moose has it all.

hungrymoose.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Artist



1st: Heather Rapp

Accentuating the already beautiful landscape of Big Sky is painter Heather Rapp. The Colorado Spring, Colorado native moved to Big Sky in 2007, along with her vibrant pallet of paints, and has since brought joy to those who come across her work. The avid outdoorswoman hikes for inspiration and estimates she paints Beehive Basin at least once a year. Rapp hopes to host more paint parties this year, will be featured in the Art Council of Big Sky's Auction for the Arts, and will be having a solo art show at Katabatic Brewing in Livingston May 1 - June 30, 2022. You can find her work at Westward Social at Big Sky Resort, Beehive Basin Brewery, Mountain Pearls Dentistry, the Hungry Moose Market & Deli, and Grizzly Outfitters.

"It feels incredible and so humbling to be recognized by the community in this way!" Rapp said. "I wouldn't be where I am today without the support and appreciation of the Big Sky community, as well as my wonderful family and friends. It's truly a gift to be able to share my art and love of wildlife, mountains and color with people. I'm grateful to each and every person who has voted for me, appreciated my artwork, bought a painting or art product from me, and those [who] have supported me throughout the years, making it possible for me to live the dream of being an artist."

heatherrapp.com

2nd: Jill Zeidler

Jill Zeidler, owner of Jill Zeidler Ceramic Art, sculpts her work with her hands. A native of Waterbury, Connecticut, Zeidler has been in Big Sky for nearly two decades, teaching at Ophir School alongside Sharon Holtzman in her Art Around the Corner program. You can find her work on display at her gallery and studio in the Big Horn Shopping Center or at the Big Sky Farmers Market on Wednesday summer evenings.

jillzeidler.com

3rd: Anna Middleton

It's not hard to be inspired as a painter when your day job is ski patrolling at Big Sky Resort. Watercolor landscape painter Anna Middleton paints the chutes and crags of Lone Mountain, as well as landscapes during her summer travels. You can find her stickers, postcards and prints online or at the Hungry Moose Market & Deli.

skycolorart.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Photographer



1st: Dave Pecunies

For seven years, professional photographer and videographer Dave Pecunies has captured a multitude of subjects from behind his lens: from the land, animals and real estate that Big Sky has to offer. Pecunies, from a Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has a passion for skiing and the outdoors and found his way to Big Sky in 2015. Today, he occupies a beautiful gallery in Town Center in the clock tower building.

"With all the talented photographers that live and work in Big Sky, it is an honor to be recognized by the community in this way," Pecunies said. "We are excited to let people know that we moved our gallery back to Town Center. Stop in to see us at 88 Ousel Falls Rd or call/text for an appointment."

davepecunies.com

2nd: Ryan Turner

Ryan Turner originally discovered the Gallatin Valley when he visited during a ski trip college. After graduating with a fine arts degree in 1996, Turner returned and followed his dream of having a gallery like Thomas Mangelsen's in Jackson, Wyoming. Today, the talented photographer has his own gallery in a new location he just opened on Town Center Avenue.

ryanturnerphotography.com

3rd: Kirby Grubaugh

Big Sky photographer Kirby Grubaugh has combined his passion for carving slopes with the art of mountain sport photography. The Kennewick, Washington native lives in Big Sky with his wife, Liv, and is a strong advocate for local artists, while he continues to capture the adrenaline of life in Big Sky.

kg-content.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Burger



1st: By Word of Mouth

BYWOM has been Big Sky's go-to for a burger packed with caramelized onions, pickles, lettuce and a secret sauce since its inception 26 years ago. The family-owned eatery has claimed the Best Burger title for many consecutive years now, and there's no secret why—owners John and Pam Flach are passionate about providing the highest quality menu in town. Pam's favorite menu item?

"There are so many great things on our menu, it is hard to pick a favorite," Pam told EBS last year. "The BYWOM burger of course, especially when we can eat it outdoors at the concerts. I think the wings follow at a close second. Everything is really good."

bywombywordofmouth.com

2nd: Copper Whiskey Bar and Grill

From bacon jam to Swiss and blue cheese, Copper Whiskey Bar and Grill's burger menu is not a hard sell. While newer to the local burger scene, Copper hasn't missed a beat since, snagging second place in the best burger category for two consecutive years.

coppermontana.com

3rd: Olive B's Big Sky Bistro

No, you're not seeing double—Olive B's menu is so memorable, they've made the Best of Big Sky twice, this time for their juicy, flavorful patties. Among their already popular menu, the burger reigns supreme, it seems, making your decision the next time you visit an easy one.

olivebsbigsky.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Pizza



1st: Ousel & Spur Pizza Co.

For the second year running, Ousel and Spur has claimed the spot for Best Pizza. Owner Jennifer Kettleridge places a heavy emphasis on high quality, locally sourced ingredients to craft her delicious pies, joining a menu of delicious, authentic Italian cuisine that makes the restaurant more than just a standard pizzeria. In addition to the ingredients and care she puts into her food, Kettleridge also attributes her success to her devoted employees.

"I have the hardest working staff, the best staff we've ever had, and we couldn't do it without them," Kettleridge said. "A year ago we weren't in this position and we're super lucky to be where we are right now. We're looking forward to our 10th winter, which is crazy. It feels like just yesterday that we opened."

ouselandspurpizza.com

2nd Blue Moon Bakery

Another frequent Best Pizza contender, Blue Moon Bakery has kept Big Sky residents well fed since they arrived 26 years ago. In addition to pizza, the family-owned bakery is known for delicious fresh sandwiches and baked goods.

bigskybluemoonbakery.com

3rd Pinky G's Pizzeria

If there's something ski towns get right, it's that post-slope, cheese-loaded slice of carbohydrates that pairs well with a local brew. Here, Pinky G's delivers, and has been doing so since they opened their Big Sky location in 2019.

pinkygs.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Bar



1st: Beehive Basin Brewery

As Town Center grows, one place hasn't changed since it opened in 2015—Beehive Basin Brewery. Beehive offers delicious, consistent beer with winning seasonal rotators and a familiar face pouring it. Whether you need a punch to the face delivered by their Space Kittens on Crack double IPA, or like to stick to the familiar with a Working Guys Cream Ale, there's always a seat for you and your pup at Beehive.

Beehive is an active member of the local community, participating in Montana State University's Malt Quality Lab programs such as the Pink Boots Session IPA, a collaboration released for International Women's Day that supports Montana women brewers and distillers. They also host regular pint nights benefitting local nonprofits as well as the Erika Pankow Scholarship Fund night, which raises money for avalanche and medical education for Big Sky locals.

beehivebasinbrewery.com

2nd: The Rocks Tasting Room and Liquor Store

No matter what time of day, the patio of The Rocks Tasting Room and Liquor Store is always filled with visitors and locals alike enjoying good food and drink. The Rocks can be relied on for a stellar fresh cocktail, local brew and friendly banter, as well as a full selection of liquor, wine and beer in the back.

the-rocks-tasting-room-and-liquor-store.business.site

3rd: Brothel Bikes

At one point (possibly) man asked where he could get both a stiff cocktail and a bike tune. Brothel Bikes in the Westfork Shopping Center answers that prayer, earning it a consistent third place for Best Bar.

(406) 995-7896

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Spa/Yoga



1st: Santosha Wellness Center

Wellness is an important aspect of living in Big Sky. Whether frequent massages get you through the cold months, or regular yoga sessions keep you loose during trail season, owner Callie Stolz and her team at the Santosha Wellness Center offer a variety of practices and holistic healing services from around the world. Recently, the center brought on a chiropractor once a week, adding additional skincare services as well as "hands-off" services such as compression therapy.

"I feel like our community is everything to us, so it definitely means a lot to us to have people give us a shout out," Stolz said. "We're always looking to try and find more options and opportunities for people to have a good recovery from the hard days work or play or just generally to take care of themselves."

santoshabigsky.com

2nd: Sanctuary

Although new to the area—owner Amy Woodger opened her doors in April of 2021—Sanctuary Big Sky has wasted no time in earning its position in the Best Spa and Yoga category. From massages to facial services, Sanctuary offers a refuge from the dry climate as well as day-to-day stressors.

bigskysanctuary.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Salon



1st: Tribe Salon

Book an appointment with owner Hannah Powell or one of her top-notch employees like Erin Mulhern at Tribe Salon and you'll be sure to leave feeling revitalized. In their third year running for Best Salon honors, Tribe focuses on educating themselves on the newest fashions in hair and makeup to keep residents of Big Sky refreshed and beautiful. As Big Sky grows, Powell says their client base is growing and the salon is extremely busy, so book your next appointment early.

"I think it's one of the biggest honors to be recognized by your local community," Powell said. "We're so thankful for all of our local clients and everyone who supports Tribe and we're so honored to be supported by the community and live here even as things get a little tougher to live here." tribesalonbigsky.com

2nd: Hairinja Salon

Hairinja is a full service salon in Meadow Village. From cuts to full color, permanent extensions, facial waxing and weddings, stylists Leah Clendenin and Casey Phelan aim to provide a fun and relaxing environment. hairinjasalon.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Wellness Business



Tie-1st Big Sky Medical Center

Six years ago, Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center opened its doors to the Big Sky community, offering expert care to full- and part-time residents as well as visitors to Big Sky. The hospital offers 24/7/365 emergency medical care, runs a medical inpatient unit, diagnostic imaging center, laboratory services and a retail pharmacy. During the pandemic, hospital staff worked hard to provide a reliable COVID-19 testing site, and now a vaccine clinic.

"Big Sky Medical Center is incredibly proud to serve the greater Big Sky Community and, we're honored to be recognized in this way by our residents," said Taylor Rose, Big Sky Medical Center's director of operations and clinical services. "We are best because of our staff. Every single one of our staff members is highly qualified and skilled in their areas of expertise, and they have a true heart for providing the best possible, high-quality, compassionate experience for every one of our patients. It is each of them that deserves this recognition."

bozemanhealth.org/locations/bozeman-health-big-sky-medical-center/

2nd: Santosha Wellness Center

It's no mistake Santosha Wellness Center is on Best of Big Sky twice—owner Callie Stolz provides a multitude of wellness services to the community, including yoga, skincare, massage, cleanses, as well as classes and workshops to keep you in prime shape year-round.

santoshabigsky.com



Tie-1st Big Sky Natural Health

Dr. Kaley Burns arrived in Big Sky from Billings two years ago, bringing with her a much-needed business—Big Sky Natural Health—as well as a passion for healing. Big Sky's active lifestyle, coupled with the pandemic revealed a refreshed focus on health. BSNH's services are well received, as proved by their Best Wellness Business win. Dr. Burns provides IV therapy, acupuncture, cryotherapy, hormone therapy, sexual wellness services and much more.

"It's a really great honor and we're just thrilled to be able to be a part of the community and offer as excellent of services as we can and it's

been a great experience so far," said Dr. Burns. She also reminds the community that as we head into cold and flu season, it is important to keep your immune system in tip-top shape. BSNH can offer house calls for Vitamin IV therapy and is also currently having a special on acupuncture and IV as a combination treatment.

bigskynaturalhealthmt.com

3rd: Moving Mountains

Whether your idea of a successful workout is to lift big and leave sore, or to stay limber and mobile, Moving Mountains in Town Center will get you there. With a variety of classes and workouts to choose from, as well as personal coaching services, Moving Mountains aims to get you to the fitness level you need to enjoy what Big Sky offers.

movingmountainsmt.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Après



1st: Scissorbills Saloon

Although it has changed hands over the decades, Scissorbills Saloon has been a mainstay of the mountain almost since the resort welcomed its first skiers in the 1970s. Its location in the resort offers a short ski boot-clad walk from the slopes and up the stairs to your finish line brew. Consistent ownership under operating partner Keith Kuhns for the last 10 years has kept the locals coming back, and crowning Scissorbills Best Après. The joint will feature their usual lineup of live music Thursday through Sunday evenings so you can put your ski boots up and relax with a cold one paired with some music.

“We’re just happy that everyone keeps enjoying our place after skiing everyday,” said Kuhns. “It feels good to get that support year after year. We do our best to keep everyone happy and keep them coming back.”

scissorbills.com

2nd: Beehive Basin Brewery

On your way out of Big Sky after an epic powder day at the resort, no day is finished without a stop at Beehive Basin Brewery. It isn't by accident the brewery snagged a “best beer” win at the 2016 Big Sky Brewfest, only a year after they opened—when it comes to perfection, owners Casey Folley and Andy Liedberg, also the head brewer—aim high.

beehivebasinbrewery.com

3rd: The Rocks Tasting Room and Liquor Store

Whether you have time to stop and chat with one of the friendly bartenders, or are just grabbing a six pack for the couch, The Rocks Tasting Room and Liquor Store provides both for your next ski après.

the-rocks-tasting-room-and-liquor-store.business.site

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Coffee



1st: Caliber Coffee

Big Sky's love for fresh coffee is almost on par with its love for fresh snow, and in the first category, Caliber Coffee delivers. Caliber boasts house roasted whole bean coffee as well as a variety of traditional espresso drinks, pour overs and drip coffee. Caliber owner Stephanie Alexander has been a barista since 1999 and attended Idaho's Diedrich Roasters roasting school and worked at the Mud Hut in Bozeman before starting Big Sky Coffee & Tea. In 2017, she bought and took over Caliber and has provided the community with a cozy space to work, listen to local music or stop in for a bite ever since.

Caliber is located in the Westfork Meadows Shopping Center where you can grab a fresh brew and a tasty treat.

calibercoffeeinc.com

Tie-2nd: ACRE Kitchen

ACRE Kitchen is a one stop shop—from breakfast to dinner, a full wine and beer list and live music to boot, there's no time of day ACRE and their friendly staff can't improve. Their recognition for Best Coffee however, is well-earned, from craft drinks to the basic local drip, their baristas are sure to wake you up before you head up the hill for some turns.

acrekitchen.com

Tie-2nd: Blue Moon Bakery

Blue Moon Bakery has already been recognized through the year for their pizza and baked goods, and their Best Coffee achievement proves they can do it all. Plus, what goes better with fresh cinnamon rolls than a piping hot brew for the road?

bigskybluemoonbakery.com

3rd: The Traveling Bean

There's a small, blue vessel parked around Big Sky in the summer months, and inside you'll find the smiling face of Traveling Bean owner, Sam Riley. She'll serve you a classic drip, espresso or a Stinger alongside a fresh pop tart from Surefire Ovens.

facebook.com/thetravelingbeanmt

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Event



1st: Big Sky PBR

It isn't quite a summer in Big Sky without the annual Big Sky PBR. The event, which recently won Event of the Year for its eight time running, gathers some of the world's top bull riders for three nights of bull-bucking adrenaline, Calcutta auction, mutton bustin' and live music, this year featuring legendary country singer, Robert Earl Keen.

"After a year hiatus it's an honor to have this large community event be recognized for best event. It was so much fun to bring this back to Big Sky," said Ennion Williams, VP of events at Outlaw Partners. "We look forward to this event in 2022 and the years following."

bigskypbr.com

2nd: Music in the Mountains

Of all the things we missed during the limitations of the pandemic, live music must have been one of the biggest. The Big Sky community let out a sigh of relief when it was announced that their beloved free concert series would return in 2021, welcoming a lineup of local talent on the lawn of the new Len Hill Park. Produced by the Arts Council of Big Sky for the last decade, the event brings the community out, even in the pouring rain.

bigskyarts.org/programs/musicinthemountains/

3rd: Big Sky Farmers Market

When the evenings get long and the weather warm, there's nothing quite like strolling through Town Center browsing your favorite local artists and producers at the Big Sky Farmers Market. The market is held each Wednesday between June and August from 5 to 7 p.m.

bigskytowncenter.com/farmers-market/



Editor's Pick: Big Sky Soul Shine

Soul Shine is more than just a live music event that gathers friends and family each August—it's a celebration of community and life, particularly that of the late Mark Robin, who passed away from complications from ALS in

2016. This year's event returned after a 2020 hiatus, featuring music by Dammit Lauren! and Moonlight Moonlight, and raising money for Team Gleason, a nonprofit that provides various kinds of support to those living with ALS.

bigskysoulshine.org

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Outdoor Retailer



1st: Grizzly Outfitters

Grizzly Outfitters has been the reigning champion of Best Outdoor Retailer for years, and it's no mystery why—no matter your needs before you embark on an adventure, Grizzly can provide. From gear to rentals, tune ups, repairs or just some sound advice from a local, the shop's helpful staff and technicians are on hand.

Owners Andrew Schreiner and Ken Lancey, who met in Big Sky Resort's rental shop, opened what would later become Grizzly Outfitters in what is now the lobby of American Bank in the spring of 1994. After a few more moves and significantly expanding their inventory and offerings, they now reside at two convenient locations: in Town Center or off of U.S. 191 by the Gallatin River.

grizzlyoutfitters.com

2nd: Gallatin Alpine Sports

With 25 years under their belt, Gallatin Alpine Sports has Big Sky covered for every adventure on your list. Owner Tom Owen and his crew provide gear and rentals with the option of delivery for everything from the rivers to the mountains.

gallatinalpinesports.com

3rd: East Slope Outdoors

East Slope Outdoors is comfortably positioned as one of the best outdoor shops in Big Sky, offering a wide range of gear, rentals and guiding services.

eastslopeoutdoors.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Fishing Outfitter



1st: Gallatin River Guides

While some guides may settle on one favorite river, Gallatin River Guides has been guiding on four rivers across the Big Sky and Bozeman area for more than 30 years now, inviting visitors and locals alike to experience our little slice of paradise. GRG hosts the Montana Fishing Guide School and the Montana Women's Fly-Fishing School, as well as guided fishing trips year round. Owner Mike Donaldson grew up fishing southwest Montana and may just help you hook your next big one.

"Thanks so much Big Sky! It is always great to be recognized by the community that we all care so much about," Donaldson said. "It is an honor to be held so highly amongst such an incredibly professional group of fly shops in Big Sky."
montanaflyfishing.com

2nd: East Slope Outdoors

East Slope Outdoors has been a staple in the Big Sky community for 35 years. They offer guided half- and full-day fly-fishing trips, floats on the Madison and Yellowstone Rivers and gear rentals.

eastslopeoutdoors.com

3rd: Wild Trout Outfitters

Established in 1988, Wild Trout Outfitters boasts a fully-stocked fly shop along the Gallatin River off of U.S. 191.

wildtroutoutfitters.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY**

Best Real Estate Agency



1st: Big Sky Real Estate Co.

The real estate industry is used to tough competition, but this Best of Big Sky position is always a clincher, especially with so many new faces in the area. Big Sky Real Estate Co. has settled comfortably into their first place position for two years now and shows no signs of stopping. Staffed with real veterans of the market and those who are familiar with Big Sky's unique market, Big Sky Real Estate Co. is the standout firm for your next home purchase.

"We are grateful for the Big Sky Community and the good fortune we have to live, work and play in such a magical part of the world," the Big Sky Real Estate Company wrote in an emailed statement to EBS. "We recognize the extraordinary gift we have to share it with our clients and our friends and are always appreciative of the relationships we have with our collective Big Sky real estate community."

bigsky.com

2nd: Big Sky Sotheby's International Realty

Big Sky Sotheby's International Realty has moved around on the Best Real Estate Agency list for the last few years, and remains steadfast in their efforts to provide quality services under local ownership since their inception in 1992.

sothebysrealty.com

3rd: L&K Real Estate

With growth in mind, co-owners Eric Ladd and Ryan Kulesza have been expanding L&K Real Estate's offerings to the Bozeman area this year. The dedicated team, supported by an experienced and steadily growing staff, are devoted to helping you find your piece of southwest Montana.

lkrealestate.com

BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY

Best Architect



1st: Centre Sky Architecture

Centre Sky Architecture has secured the title Best Architect once more, and not for lack of experience. Founder and Principal Architect Jamie Daugaard have been crafting custom residential, ranch, resort and commercial architecture across the Rocky Mountain West since 1998. CSA actually remembers a Big Sky before the Yellowstone Club and Spanish Peaks Mountain Club because they were some of the firm's first projects in the area. Today, they work on projects across the region.

"When you look back there are a good number of individuals that help shape myself and Centre Sky: my family, the Centre Sky team, current and past clients, which a good amount are from Big Sky," Daugaard said.

Daugaard also attributes the success of his company to the general contractors who execute his work as well as support from the Montana State University Architecture Department and professors that guided him along his professional path and built confidence and a work ethic while he was an architectural student.

centresky.com

2nd: 45 Architecture

45 Architecture is a diverse planning, architecture and interior design firm co-founded in 2014 in Bozeman by Benjamin Erickson and then later joined by architect Jeff Lusin. With projects in both the private and public sectors, 45 Architecture is currently working on a unique infill project on the northeast side of Bozeman near Wild Crumb, a popular community gathering space.

3rd: Bechtle Architects

Bechtle Architects has deep roots in Big Sky as they have designed many of the buildings throughout Town Center and Big Sky Resort. Today, they keep busy on a wide range of projects from small residential remodels to million-square-foot, mixed-use buildings we see everyday in Big Sky.

bechtlearchitects.com

BEST OF
BIG
2021 SKY

Best Builder



1st: Highline Partners

Highline Construction is inspired by the environment. They specialize in designing luxury homes in the Big Sky area and custom remodels with a focus on the surrounding landscape and world around us. Whether it's a custom raw wood mantle or ski-out access to the nearest run, Highline Construction's talented team can make your dream lifestyle a reality, starting with your home. This is Highline's first time being recognized in Best of Big Sky!

"It's really exciting for us having never received this award previously," said Rob McRae, who co-owns Highline alongside business partner Todd Thesing. "We're honored and excited. It's our team that allows it all to happen and makes a difference."

highline-partners.com

2nd: Big Sky Build

Big Sky Build are regulars on the Best of Big Sky roster. Owner and founder John Seelye started Big Sky Woodwork & Design in 1997 after he fell in love with the area on a ski trip and has since given as much back to the community as it has given to him. He stands by his talented team, attributing them to the high quality work Big Sky Build continues to produce.

bigskybuild.com

3rd: Lone Pine Builders

Lone Pine Builders does more than build homes—they build long lasting relationships with their clients and contractors. They take pride in the details, small and large, and give back to a number of local nonprofits.

lonepinebuilders.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 BIG
SKY**

Best Property Management



1st: Two Pines Properties

Two Pines Properties has done it again for the third time in a row. In a vacation town like Big Sky, Best Property Management hosts some steep competition, but Wes and Alex Hoecker keep it simple: provide the best possible service. While they began with a single condo about a decade ago, Two Pines has since grown into one of the most respected property management companies in the region. Business success aside, the husband-wife team are humbled simply to be living in Big Sky and supported by the community they love so much.

“It’s huge, we’re the largest locally owned vacation rental company and we take a lot of pride in that and everybody who comes in, whether it’s staff or clients or guests, we preach that we want to show the very best of Big Sky to our community,” Wes said. “It’s been a tough couple of years with COVID, but it’s been good at the same time to see us all come together. We want to say thanks to all of our clients, staff, guests and community.”

twopinesvacationrentals.com

2nd: Ascend Properties

Ascend knows that with the area’s growth also comes great responsibility as a property management company. With nearly two decades of experience under his belt, founder and owner Adam Farr has managed more than 300 luxury homes at once and brought that same work ethic and passion to Ascend.

ascendbigsky.com

3rd: Hammond Property Management

Another family-owned property management firm, Hammond was founded in 1997 and specializes in HOA management, snow removal, maintenance and all aspects of condo complex services.

hpmmontana.com

**BEST OF
BIG
2021 BIG
SKY**

Best Nonprofit



1st: Big Sky Bravery

Big Sky Bravery believes we owe a debt of gratitude to the members of our military’s active duty special operations forces. Josh McCain founded Big Sky Bravery after witnessing the process it took his brother-in-law, Jeremy Keller, to rebuild his community after a 17-year career in the special operations forces. Their post-deployment decompression programs help participants reconnect to themselves, their families and their communities after returning, building trust and brotherhood. In 2021, they hosted 18 weeklong programs called Task Forces, their highest number yet. In 2022, they will host 22 Task Forces with 110 recipients. To meet the needs of these expanded programs, BSB is always looking for support, including items to be donated for their annual auction that will take place in September 2022.

“This is a powerful reminder to all of the recipients who come through our programs that they are seen, they are appreciated and what they’re fighting for are patriots who truly care,” McCain said. “The Big Sky Bravery team is thrilled and beyond grateful, but our celebration is paired with gratitude for an incredible community who is paying attention and willing to give back to those who remain on the front lines.”

bigskybravery.org

2nd: Big Sky Community Organization

Big Sky loves their trails and recreation, and Big Sky Community Organization’s reoccurring win as Best Nonprofit is proof of that. Whether you’re biking Hummocks Trail, on one of the area’s many groomed cross-country ski trails, playing softball or heading up to Beehive Basin for an after-work hike, you are enjoying services provided by this local nonprofit. BSCO is currently anticipating the opening of the new BASE Community Center in Town Center and memberships are on sale now.

bscomt.org

3rd: Big Sky Community Food Bank

Big Sky is home to many seasonal employees, and that, coupled with a high cost of living, causes food insecurity. The Big Sky Community Food Bank, a program of the Human Resource Development Council, works tirelessly to provide those in need with a reliable food source through its food pantry, vouchers for local grocery stores and much more.

bigskyfoodbank.org



Editor’s Pick: Big Sky Search and Rescue

Last summer, when a runner fell coming off Lone Mountain during the Rut Mountain Runs, Big Sky Search and Rescue were among the crews to help reach him and pull him safely off the mountain. That’s what the search and rescue team does best—help those in need while recreating so they can get patched up and back out into the mountains. Their tireless devotion to keeping us safe is why we’ve chosen our local search and rescue as this year’s Editor’s Pick for Best Nonprofit.

bsar.org