

Guide to Giving

WINTER 2018-2019

This section is brought to you by:



Big Sky Nonprofits

All Saints in Big Sky	allsaintsinbigsky.com
Arts Council of Big Sky	bigskyarts.org
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Gallatin County	bbbs-gc.org
Big Sky Chapel	bigskychapel.com
Big Sky Christian Fellowship	bigskychristianfellowship.com
Big Sky Community Food Bank	bigskyfoodbank.org
Big Sky Community Library	bigskylibrary.com
Big Sky Community Organization	bscomt.org
Big Sky Discovery Academy	bigskydiscoveryacademy.org
Big Sky Futbol Club	bigskyfc.org
Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association, Inc.	bssd72.org
Big Sky Ski Education Foundation	bssha.org
Big Sky Youth Empowerment	bssef.com
Crail Ranch Homestead Museum	bscomt.org/ crail-ranch-homestead-museum
Eagle Mount – Bozeman	eaglemount.org
Friends of Big Sky Education	friendsofbigskyeducation.org
Friends of the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center	mtavalanche.org
Gallatin River Task Force	gallatinrivertaskforce.org
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance	gallatinisa.org
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	greateryellowstone.org
Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center	grizzlywolfdiscoveryctr.org
HATCH	hatchexperience.org
Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter	heartofthevalleyshelter.org
Jack Creek Preserve Foundation	jackcreekpreserve.org
KidsLINK After School Program - Ophir	bssd72.org
Montana Land Reliance	mtlandreliance.org
Montana Wilderness Association	montanamountaineering.org
Morningstar Learning Center	morningstarlearningcenter.org
Rotary Club of Big Sky	bigskyrotary.org
Soldiers Chapel	(406) 995-4089
Spanish Peaks Community Foundation	spanishpeaksfoundation.org
Thrive	allthrive.org
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center	warrenmillerpac.org
Western Sustainability Exchange	westernsustainabilityexchange.org
Women In Action	bigskywia.org
Wortman Lung Cancer Foundation	wortmanlungcancerfoundation.org
Yellowstone Club Community Foundation	yellowstoneclubfoundation.org
Yellowstone Forever	yellowstone.org

There are countless nonprofits in our region, and we couldn't possibly list them all here, but we encourage you to find one that you identify with and feel inclined to support either monetarily or by volunteering.

The gift of giving

How to maximize your tax benefit when making charitable donations

BY TYLER ALLEN
EBS MANAGING EDITOR

Everyone has their own reasons for giving their time or money to charitable causes, and philanthropy is a personal decision. Yet, for those with the means, there are some strategies to enhance your tax benefit when giving monetarily.

EBS recently spoke to Doug Neil with Neil & Company CPAs P.C., a Bozeman accounting firm that opened in 1976, and asked him how to maximize your tax benefit when giving to nonprofits and other charitable organizations.

Depending on an individual's income and age, there are a few things to consider when donating to a 501(c)(3), Neil said. With the passage of the 2018 federal tax reform, retirees can benefit by contributing money straight from their Individual Retirement Account, which is considered a qualified charitable distribution.

"[These donations] go straight from your IRA to the organization and the IRA is then not taxable," he said. "Prior to the tax reform, a lot of those folks might have itemized the deductions, but the reform made the standard deduction increase, meaning if you took the standard deduction you can't benefit. But now you can donate straight from your IRA and still benefit." This lowers an individual's adjusted gross income, which ultimately lowers their tax burden.

Neil said that there are also benefits to making charitable donations at year's end, especially because it's a particularly good time for organizing your tax portfolio. "A lot of people are trying to figure out what they can do for tax planning [at the end of the year], and charitable donations are a great thing to include in their planning," he said, adding that people who itemize their returns can take a tax deduction for the amount they give throughout the year.

When considering how much to donate, and how it will affect your taxes, there is no minimum amount required—but you must consider substantiation rules: if you make a one-time donation of \$250 or less to a nonprofit, you just need a record of a canceled check, bank or credit card statement. "That's a good reason that using a check or credit card is preferable over cash—you have a paper trail," Neil said.

However, if you donate more than \$250 at one time, you're required by the IRS to obtain acknowledgement from the organization. Additionally, many people will give in-kind donations—anything that isn't cash, such as a piano, or taking a bag of clothes to Goodwill—and you must have the nonprofit provide you with documentation that estimates the value of that donation, Neil said, adding that if it's an object valued at more than \$5,000 you technically need to get an appraisal.

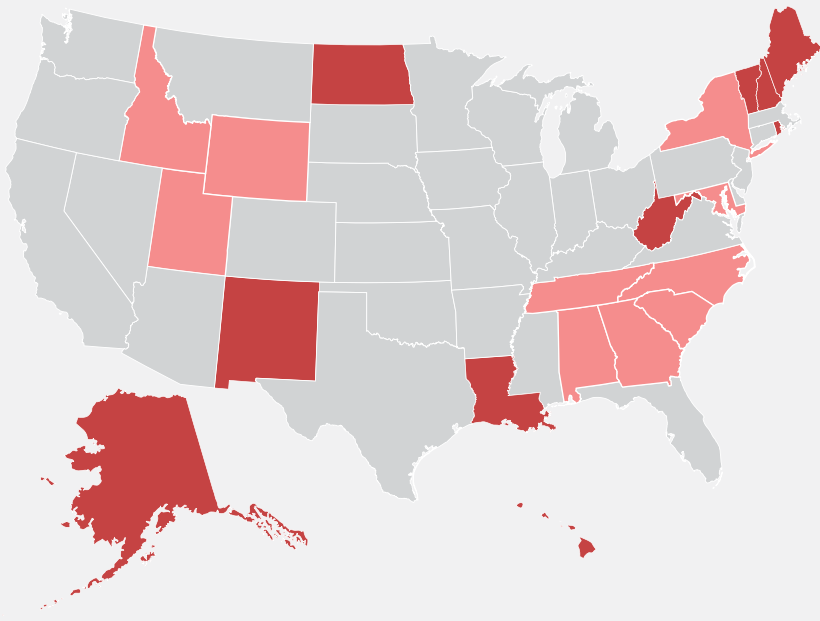
Neil sees clients in every tax bracket participating in philanthropy, and there's no stereotypical charitable donor based on income. "It really depends on personal values," he said. "Some people just pick what's important to their values or town, it's different for everyone out there."

Most people who donate to nonprofits diversify their giving portfolio, he said, determining the amount they want to give and then identifying the five to 10 organizations—from hyper local to national 501(c)(3)s—and dividing that amount as they see fit.

If you're in the giving spirit this holiday season, take some time with this special nonprofit guide to find organizations or causes that you care about.

Giving BY THE NUMBERS

GIVING BY LOCATION



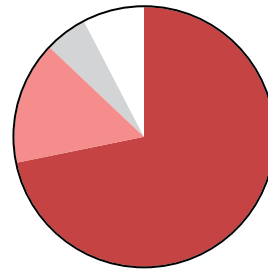
TOP TEN STATES

1. UTAH
2. WYOMING
3. GEORGIA
4. ALABAMA
5. MARYLAND
6. SOUTH CAROLINA
7. IDAHO
8. NORTH CAROLINA
9. TENNESSEE
10. NEW YORK

BOTTOM TEN STATES

1. LOUISIANA
2. NEW MEXICO
3. ALASKA
4. RHODE ISLAND
5. HAWAII
6. VERMONT
7. NEW HAMPSHIRE
8. MAINE
9. NORTH DAKOTA
10. WEST VIRGINIA

CHARITABLE GIVING



DONOR SOURCE

- Individuals \$281.86 billion
- Foundations \$58.28 billion
- Corporations \$18.55 billion
- Other

69%
OF THE
POPULATION
GIVES

30%
OF ANNUAL
GIVING
OCCURS IN
DECEMBER

77% BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
BY SUPPORTING CAUSES

WHERE MOST CHARITABLE DOLLARS GO:



Religion - 32%



Education - 16%



Grant-Making
Foundations - 11%



Human Services
16%



Health - 9%

CORPORATE GIVING



In 2017, corporate
donations increased to
\$20.77 billion



9 out of 10 companies
offered a matching gift program

90% indicated that partnering with
reputable nonprofit organizations
enhances their brand

89% believe partnering leverages
their ability to
improve the community

GENERATIONAL GIVING

	MILLENNIALS 1980-1996 25.9% of U.S. population	GENERATION X 1965-1979 20.4% of U.S. population	BABY BOOMERS 1946-1964 23.6% of U.S. population
ENROLLED IN MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM	40%	49%	49%
DONATE TO CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGNS	46%	45%	35%
VOLUNTEER LOCALLY	64%	64%	71%
VOLUNTEER INTERNATIONALLY	9%	8%	9%
ATTEND FUNDRAISING EVENTS	55%	56%	58%

Sources: nonprofitssource.com/online-giving-statistics/ and philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/statistics/who-gives

Yellowstone Club Community Foundation

Nonprofits are the backbone of our community. They nourish and protect our people, land, water, wildlife and culture. Whether you enjoy the free Thursday night summer concert series put on by the Arts Council of Big Sky or love exploring our amazing trail system maintained by Big Sky Community Organization, chances are you have personally benefited from the work of a local nonprofit.

The Yellowstone Club Community Foundation serves as a resource for nonprofits in the greater Big Sky and Gallatin Valley areas. The foundation has a small staff that focuses on engaging Yellowstone Club member donors and finding ways to strategically support our community most effectively. To do that, YCCF spends a lot of time researching best practices across the nation and collaborating with other community foundations in the West to learn about systems and approaches that have been successful in their towns.

Currently, we are seeing a trend wherein many donors and foundations are moving away from targeted grants for projects (such as paying for supplies for one education event) and toward broader support for their nonprofits. This includes unrestricted funds, multiyear gifts and/or "capacity building" support.

Capacity building encompasses development including things like training for fundraising, leadership development, software installation and collaboration or team building. The objective is that these trainings increase a nonprofit's overall effectiveness to meet its mission. YCCF is working to find the right balance of targeted grants and capacity building. We encourage you to think strategically about your philanthropy this giving season and throughout the year.

Five ways to further your philanthropy:

1. We are all philanthropists, no matter the donation amount. Consider how you can be most strategic with your funds. You might want to focus your giving on your passions such as art, children, education or the environment, for example.

2. Think beyond money. Volunteer your time, talents and/or network.

3. Come listen to a national nonprofit thought leader. YCCF is proud to collaborate with Montana State University to bring speaker Vu Le to speak in Bozeman on Thursday, March 28, 2019. Vu is insightful and hilarious about nonprofits, foundations and donors, and you can learn more here: nonprofitaf.com. Come laugh, learn, and be inspired.

4. Utilize online giving days to engage with community nonprofits and their projects. Give Big Gallatin Valley is Thursday and Friday, May 2-3, 2019 and supports almost 200 Gallatin Valley and Big Sky nonprofits. You can participate regardless of your geographic location that day. Spread the word on social media to engage friends and new donors.

5. Ask the nonprofits and people you want to help what they really need. You may be surprised by the answer, and it could be an action as simple as helping write thank-you cards.



Here, Sarah Gaither, Big Sky Community Food Bank's operations manager, stocks shelves. The food bank is open Tuesdays from 3-7 p.m. and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. PHOTO BY KYLE REED



The Yellowstone Club Community Foundation hosted a communications training for local nonprofits with Lori Addicks at Fork & Spoon Homestyle Kitchen in Bozeman. PHOTO BY ANNA SHIPLEY



Gallatin River Task Force volunteers plant vegetation as part of the Moose Creek Flat restoration project. Volunteers rebuilt streambanks, restored streamside vegetation and improved access at the popular day-use area. PHOTO BY JEFF DUNN

Montana Wilderness Association

Ken Baldwin was fed up. The manager of a Bozeman-based oil distribution plant, Ken spent his weekends deep in the Madison and Gallatin Ranges with his wife Florence, but his beloved backcountry was changing before his eyes. Intensive logging, unfettered motorized use, and road construction were taking a heavy toll on the wildlife and solitude that, in Ken's eyes, made southwestern Montana's high country so special.

In 1958, the Baldwins sent a letter to 100 friends and colleagues, inviting them to a meeting to discuss what they saw as a fast-growing need for wilderness protection in Montana. Two weeks later, 21 people from across the state met at Bozeman's Baxter Hotel, and Montana Wilderness Association was born.

In the six decades since that initial meeting, MWA has been at the forefront of public lands protection in Montana. In the early '60s, we championed the Wilderness Act, which created Montana's first five wilderness areas: the Anaconda-Pintler, Bob Marshall, Cabinet Mountains, Gates of the Mountains, and Selway-Bitterroot. We have been behind the designation of every Montana wilderness area since then.

Our work has helped shape the destiny of southwest Montana's most treasured wild places, from the towering plateaus of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness to the jagged peaks and deep canyons of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, which permanently protects large swaths of the Madison Range.

Today, our commitment to southwest Montana's wildlands is exemplified by our participation in the Gallatin Forest Partnership, a group of individuals, businesses and organizations that has come together to find solutions for the management of public lands, wild places, wildlife habitat, recreational resources and clean water in the Madison and Gallatin Ranges. You can learn more about the Partnership and add your endorsement at gallatinpartners.org.

Our commitment to protecting Montana's wild and public lands hasn't wavered in the 60 years we've been operating. In 2017, we successfully led the fight to defend the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument from possible elimination. And in 2018, we fought back three bills from Sen. Steve Daines and Rep. Greg Gianforte that would strip longstanding protections from 29 wilderness study areas comprising more than 800,000 acres of our wildest public lands.



PHOTO BY SCOTT WHEELER

Today, our focus is on passing the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act, which would add 80,000 acres to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountains wilderness areas. We are also committed to permanently protecting the Badger-Two Medicine on the Rocky Mountain Front, an area sacred to the Blackfoot Nation, and to permanently protecting 180,000 acres of wilderness in the Cabinet Mountains, Scotchman Peaks, and Yaak Valley of northwestern Montana.

We couldn't do this work without the support of all those who love Montana's wild public lands and the opportunities for fishing, hiking, camping, wildlife and solitude they provide. If you'd like to join us in fighting for these special places, become a member at wildmontana.org/donate today.



MONTANA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance

Living in Big Sky means that we are blessed to have access to almost unlimited recreational opportunities. Pick a trail, pack the gear and go explore! But have you noticed those trailhead parking lots filling up?

The area is booming again. Combine the increased impacts with the stressors of a changing climate, and the pressures on our natural resources add up. Resource managers everywhere recognize the threat that invasive species pose to the integrity and function of the environment. The Gallatin watershed is no exception. In 2004, two forward-thinking individuals formed the Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, to help conserve native plants, wildlife habitat and water resources through invasive species education and management.

Non-native invasive species reduce property values, decrease biodiversity and disrupt ecosystem function, while displacing native species, increasing the severity and frequency of wildfires, and further threatening endangered and rare species.

So, what does the Alliance do?



PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLATIN INVASIVE SPECIES ALLIANCE

Provide Free Help for Landowners

To date we've helped 707 individual landowners, providing information and resources on sustainable land management. We've also led community cooperative treatment days, representing a value of \$25,000 for the community.

The greater Big Sky area is comprised of 50,000 acres of private land surrounded by National Forest, so what happens on private property can significantly impact public lands. If you own land in the greater Big Sky area or Gallatin Canyon, contact us for help at gallatinisa.org.

Work to Improve Wildlife Habitat

Since 2000, we have worked to improve the Spanish Peaks bighorn sheep herd's winter range. This effort represents eight years of work with six different partners, \$61,000 in matching funds and a completed study on native revegetation efforts.

In addition, the Alliance has held annual weed pulls along the Gallatin River, Big Sky Community Park, and other public lands resulting in 600 volunteers removing more than 12,500 pounds of noxious weeds.

Detect New Invaders

The Alliance has identified new invaders, including field scabious and yellow flag iris, as well as monitoring and treating patches of leafy spurge in highly used public spaces.

Promote Clean Recreational Habits

By land: This fall we installed four "PlayCleanGo" trailhead signs at Hummocks/Uplands, Black Diamond, Little Willow Way and South Fork Loop. Two more signs will go in next spring at Ousel Falls and Beehive Basin.

By water: In 2016, the Alliance reached out to Gallatin River Task Force to promote clean fishing habits with the "CleanDrainDry" public relations campaign.

Inspire the Community

The Alliance is excited to announce it will break ground next spring for the Native Demonstration Garden at Crail Ranch. This cooperative project will educate, inspire, and beautify a beloved community asset through water-wise landscape principals that showcase native plants and compliment the many conservation efforts already underway in Big Sky. The Alliance is actively seeking donations to help make this project extraordinary. Help us to grown native and donate online now at gallatinisa.org.



Heart of the Valley

Are you thinking about adding a four-legged companion to your family? We encourage you to adopt from Heart of the Valley. Last year, we found new homes for over 2,100 homeless dogs and cats, and our dedicated staff is eager to help you find your new best friend.

At HOV, our mission is to compassionately shelter the lost and surrendered pets of the Madison and Gallatin valleys and to enhance the lives of people and companion animals through pet adoption and education.

Each year, we care for thousands of lost and homeless animals until they can go home. This care can be lifesaving for animals like Mia, who was brought to HOV by a group who rescued her from a reservation. And at only 8 weeks old, she was in really, really rough shape. She tested positive for both parvovirus and distemper, and was very sick. She also had a skin condition called mange. And to top it off, lack of proper nutrition as she was growing had prevented one of her front legs from developing properly. Mia was in desperate need of lifesaving medical attention.

We slowly nursed her back to health and she impressed us with her will to live. Mia recovered from her illnesses, and with proper nutrition and lots of love from her adoptive family, her leg began to straighten out until miraculously today she jumps and runs just like any other puppy. Instead of merely surviving, she is now thriving in her new home.

In addition to reuniting lost pets with their grateful families and finding new homes for homeless animals, HOV serves as an educational resource for our community. We offer training classes and behavioral consultations. We provide humane education courses for children through schools, youth groups and our Pet Pals summer camp. We offer special programs for veterans and seniors and provide low cost spay/neuter services for low-income families.

In return, we rely on community support to operate the shelter. Hundreds of volunteers give thousands of hours of service each year to help care for animals and provide outreach and education. The majority of our annual funding comes from the generosity of donors who believe in our mission and have a passion for helping animals and for giving back to their community.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HEART OF THE VALLEY

You can find out more about HOV by visiting the shelter (we are open seven days each week from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.), going to our website, heartofthevalleyshelter.org, or by calling us at (406) 388-9399.

We are proud to serve the Madison and Gallatin valleys and hope you will visit the shelter to learn how you can get involved. This holiday season, please consider a donation to Heart of the Valley to help us continue our lifesaving work.



Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Big Sky

Growing up isn't getting any easier, even when you live under the Big Sky. That's why Big Brothers Big Sisters is committed to providing long-term, life-changing mentors for kids.

BBBS pairs children facing adversity with mentors, or "Bigs." One way or another, adversity can and does reach children, even those who grow up skiing, snowshoeing, and fly-fishing with a near-constant view of the Madison Range. A major life change can throw kids into turmoil and send them hunting for solace. What's the best antidote to loneliness and confusion? Another caring person to listen and help guide them is the answer.

One example: Big Sister "Tanya" plays that role for Little Brother "F." Now matched for almost two years, Tanya helps shape the person 7-year-old F is becoming. When they meet weekly, Tanya often suggests an outdoor activity, to which video-game-loving F sometimes responds, "No, I don't think I will like that." Tanya is persistent and knows the benefits of being outside; she also knows F and is a trustworthy mentor. After visiting a new park together, F recently reported, "I changed my mind. That was fun. When can we do it again?"



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF GALLATIN COUNTY

BBBS facilitates life-changing relationships. Through two program models, this nationally recognized mentoring organization helps children achieve greater confidence, better relationships, stronger academic performance, and avoidance of drugs and alcohol. The community-based program features children matched with adult mentors, while the school-based model features elementary students matched with high school mentors.

Although BBBS of Gallatin County's office is in Bozeman, a dedicated staff person (also a Big Sky resident) coordinates and supports matches specifically in Big Sky, both in the community and within Ophir and Lone Peak schools.

Sure, this nonprofit believes in every child's potential, but what about the details? Here are common questions and answers about Big Brothers Big Sisters:

Who are the "Littles"?

"Littles" are children from various backgrounds, needs, income levels and family structures who enroll in the free program and are matched with a mentor after an interview process and pending acceptance. In short, they're creative, bright and full of potential.

Can I volunteer as a mentor with my spouse?

In the community-based program, mentors can volunteer on their own as a "Big Brother" or a "Big Sister," or as "Big Couples" or "Big Families."

How does BBBS guarantee compatibility between Bigs and Littles?

Guarantees are hard to come by, but BBBS's matching process relies on thorough interviews, safety checks and reference calls, pre-match trainings, and regular coaching along the way. Our evidence-based model works.

Can you tell me more about Big Sister Tanya and Little Brother F?

Yes. They went to lunch together recently and F drew a picture for his mentor while they waited for their food. It was of the two of them at the park holding hands.

Each child under the Big Sky has potential and Big Brothers Big Sisters defends it. Want to become a mentor, enroll a child, or otherwise support BBBS? Visit bbbs-gc.org or call (406) 587-1216.



Big Sky Youth Empowerment

The Bozeman-based nonprofit Big Sky Youth Empowerment has raised more than \$1.8 million in expansion funding from a small group of generous donors to address the growing demand for its compelling programs. Targeting Gallatin Valley's most vulnerable teenagers, BYEP creates opportunities for young adults to experience success through compelling life-skills curricula and outdoor adventures. From financial literacy to rock climbing, BYEP exposes at-risk teens to life-changing experiences in a fun, group-oriented environment, guided by a team of amazing volunteer mentors.

Now 17 years old, BYEP currently serves 128 youth, and routinely has a waitlist for its 100 percent scholarship-based program. The expansion funding will allow the organization to increase the total number of youth served to 200 by the year 2021. Through this expansion, youth will be able to engage in programs up to five times per week with annual program hours growing from 46,000 to a projected 83,000 hours. The organization, with support from Montana State University, will expand tutoring to four nights per week during the school year and will also provide ongoing elective workshops, which will include book discussions and art workshops, along with mindfulness and wellness training. BYEP will also expand on its job-skills training, placement, and independent living workshops for older participants and alumni. This is an incredible commitment to the community's adolescent population, and the realization of a long-held dream of BYEP Founder and Executive Director Pete MacFadyen.

In order to realize this expansion, the organization will be increasing its approximate 3,000-square-foot footprint in its existing location at 225 East Mendenhall Street to 9,000 square feet by occupying adjacent space to the north and west via a long-term lease. BYEP's operating budget is expected to grow to an annual run-rate of \$1.5 million, which places it in the top tier of nonprofits based in Bozeman, and establishes the nonprofit at a long-term, sustainable size.

With a solid plan in place to expand programming and impact, Pete MacFadyen has decided to pass the leadership torch and will be stepping down as BYEP's executive director in July of 2019. Pete will continue to pursue his personal mission of "making the world a better place" and will remain an integral part of BYEP by taking a seat on its board of directors.

BYEP would like to thank this incredibly supportive community, from the bottom of our hearts, for believing in today's youth and their ability to grow and contribute. The



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

difference made in the lives of our participants is an opportunity numerous teens in our community deserve, and Big Sky Youth Empowerment depends upon the local community to make this possible. It is truly life-saving work, and we are only able to do it with your support. Please consider making a donation this holiday season by visiting byep.org.

If you would like more information about the organization and its expansion, volunteering, or the impact of your gift, please visit byep.org or call (406) 551-9660.



Khumbu Climbing Center

In 2003, Jenni Lowe-Anker and Conrad Anker established the Khumbu Climbing Center in Nepal as a project of the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation in memory of Alex Lowe.

The mission of the Khumbu Climbing Center is to provide the Nepali climbing community with technical climbing, mountain safety, medicine and rescue skills that are needed to make a living through their dangerous but lucrative jobs of climbing the world's highest mountains. In 15 years, the KCC program has educated more than 1,200 Sherpa and indigenous Nepalis. By extension, KCC technical training is safeguarding all Himalayan climbers who employ Nepali guides and high-altitude workers.

Each winter, Nepali climbers come from villages near and far to gather in Phortse, Nepal for the KCC training. The classes fill quickly each season and are sought after by aspiring young climbers. The initial students have now become instructors and advanced instructors, and KCC-trained students and



PHOTO BY AMRIT ALE

instructors provide the safest teams working on Everest. Their knowledge is shared with fellow teammates inducing a multiplier effect.

The KCC has also focused on increasing women's participation and equal opportunity. Many KCC graduates go on to become community leaders and, in some cases, national heroes like Pasang Lhamu Sherpa Akita and Ang Tshering Lama. Pasang became one of the first Nepali women to summit Everest, K2 and countless other peaks but also launched her own nonprofit to help fellow Nepalis in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquakes. Ang launched his own successful guide company, leaped into first-responder action after the earthquakes, and gained national attention for rescuing and saving the life of a young Sherpa climber from high on the slopes of Everest in 2017.

After years of successful instructional courses, the Nepali Board of Directors expressed the desire for an independent building in Phortse village to house the Khumbu Climbing Center. The community building will house and sustain the Khumbu Climbing Center program in perpetuity. Serving as the headquarters for KCC, the passive solar building will also serve as an earthquake-safe community center, library and medical clinic for the village and surrounding area. All aspects of the KCC building will provide the capacity to generate income for KCC programs to continue to thrive and expand. The foundation is excited to announce completion of the KCC building this coming spring.

Donations to the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation this year will support the completion of the KCC building and help secure an endowment for the KCC program to continue.

To donate and learn more, visit alexlowe.org or @[khumbuclimbingcenter](https://www.instagram.com/khumbuclimbingcenter) on Instagram. The Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax deductible.



Montana Land Reliance

The Montana Land Reliance partners with private landowners to permanently protect agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open space.

The immediate accomplishments of MLR's work are measured in miles of streambank and acres of land and habitat protected. The lasting benefits of MLR's efforts are the perpetuation of a lifestyle and an economy that rely on responsibly managed private land and increasingly valuable Montana open spaces that will continue to nourish the spirit of future generations.

MLR serves the Big Sky community by working with landowners to complete land protection projects. MLR's conservation easement ventures protect valuable open space and wildlife habitat, buffer public land and enhance landscapes for tourism, all factors that contribute to protecting the character of our community and the integrity of the ecosystem in which we live.

Such conservation work is particularly important because the region's private lands contain disproportionately significant habitat, and are not only crucial for Montana's wildlife, but also for Big Sky's commercial and residential environment. The protected acreage provides ecosystem services, such as air and water filtration, that benefit Big Sky's residents and mitigate the effects of its growing infrastructure.

MLR has conserved more than 1.05 million acres statewide, including more than 300,000 acres in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Within the Resort Tax boundary of Big Sky, MLR has protected 9,581 acres of land, 29 miles of streams and riverfront, and 9,000 acres of elk habitat. Recently, MLR worked with the Yellowstone Club, Boyne, and the U.S. Forest Service to transfer a 1,443-acre conservation easement on a portion of the Yellowstone Club into MLR's care in perpetuity.

MLR has a perpetual presence in the Big Sky area since conservation easements protect lands in perpetuity. MLR stewards its nearly 10,000 protected acres in Big Sky on an annual basis, and its work to protect water quality and quantity, scenic beauty and wildlife habitat and corridors in Big Sky's beautiful community makes it an organization worthy of community support.

The Montana lifestyle relies on and revolves around protected open space and public lands. Employers, entrepreneurs and visitors choose Montana, and Big Sky in particular,



PHOTO BY ALEXIS BONOGOFSKY

because of the quality of life it provides, its scenery and readily available outdoor recreation opportunities. Big Sky has one of the strongest economies in the state. The views, habitat, access to outdoors and open lands are fueling that success.

To learn more, stop by the 35 Marketplace building in the Big Sky Meadow Village, or email or call Jessie Wiese at jessie@mtlandreliance.org; (406) 594-1570.



Western Sustainability Exchange

Did you know that you are in the last intact temperate-zone ecosystem remaining on the planet—the last one that is virtually whole, essentially complete? Did you know that the diversity of wildlife in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is second only to that of the Serengeti?

Montana is exceptional, indeed. But that very exceptionalism is drawing more and more people. Bozeman is the fastest growing micro-city in the nation, projected to become the size of Salt Lake City by 2041. Kalispell is close behind. That's going to put a lot of pressure on our incomparable landscape.

Here at Western Sustainability Exchange, we believe Big Sky Country is still healthy primarily because of the stewardship of farmers and ranchers. Their lands provide much of the wide-open spaces and habitat that fish and wildlife depend on for survival. We must help our agricultural neighbors stay on their land. The choices they make about land management and development will determine the future of the region. They are our firewall—our first line of defense—if we are to protect the environmental integrity and cultural character of Montana.

For 25 years, WSE has helped farmers and ranchers use practices that protect the environment, produce nutritious food and increase their profitability. Over 1.45 million acres are already being sustainably managed by over 1,000 producers who are connected to our network of 50 restaurants, serving local cuisine and generating millions of dollars in annual sales for producers in WSE's programs. Think how we could magnify this impact with your support.

WSE is launching a groundbreaking new program that protects Montana while mitigating the impacts of climate change: our Montana Grasslands Carbon Initiative.

The science is becoming increasingly compelling that healthy grasslands are more effective than rainforests for extracting dangerous carbon dioxide from the atmosphere—through photosynthesis—and sequestering the carbon deep underground. Unfortunately, over 80 percent of the earth's grasslands are in poor to marginal condition.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTERN SUSTAINABILITY EXCHANGE

What if grasslands were brought back to health? A growing number of scientists believe improving even half of the world's grasslands could begin to mitigate climate change. WSE is providing information, technical assistance and upfront funding ranchers need to create healthy soil and grasslands in Montana by using regenerative grazing techniques designed to sequester carbon. We will offer carbon offset credits to companies dedicated to reducing their carbon footprint, then use the funds to pay ranchers for the carbon their land sequesters each year. The program is the first of its kind and scale, and could become the model for grassland management around the world.

Please join us in our quest to ensure our wide-open spaces, iconic wildlife, and agricultural heritage are preserved for future generations—and do our part to mitigate climate change. Please visit westernsustainabilityexchange.org to learn more.



Big Sky Community Food Bank

Since opening its doors in 2012, the Big Sky Community Food Bank has served 2,087 unique individuals - including 78 children and 67 senior citizens. In a town as small as Big Sky, chances are you know someone who has used the food bank.

BSCFB is unlike most other food banks: 97.5 percent of our clientele are employed. In Big Sky, many struggle to make ends meet as the cost of living increases and wages are stagnant. Our clients include both year-round essential and seasonal workers, families who have lived here for years and new young professionals hoping to make Big Sky their home. In such a tight economy, many of our neighbors are just one fender bender or trip to the emergency room away from losing everything. BSCFB exists to bridge the gap when clients are in a food emergency, and to help Big Sky become a stable and livable place for all.

Clients can use the food bank only once each month and can choose enough food for a week's supply. In this way, we ensure that clients are only using our services during emergencies, when they are out of other options. Our other services include a crockpot and cookware exchange for those who do not have full kitchens, warm winter clothing for children and adults, as well as help enrolling in Medicaid/healthcare insurance, tax assistance, referrals for mental and legal help, and a collaborative relationship with the Big Sky Community Housing Trust.

BSCFB was created as a local effort between the Human Resource Development Council and Big Sky community members, led by Lynne Anderson of the Country Market. The food bank is open two days a week year round, is managed by a local Sarah Gaither Bivins, along with a group of dedicated volunteers including Advisory Council President Pam Rempt. The food bank rescues unsold produce, dairy and bread products from the grocery stores and bakeries in Big Sky, as well as canned goods from the donation bins around town. We are aided by canned food drives initiated by the Big Sky schools and community groups, but often have to purchase food from the Montana Food Bank Network.

As Big Sky grows, so will our food bank. We currently receive funding from all of the community foundations and Big Sky Resort Tax, but those grant monies



PHOTO BY KYLE REED

are not necessarily sustainable. We are looking to partner with local community members and businesses that will commit to support the food bank on a yearly basis. In order to meet the growing demand, we need community members to sustain our efforts into the future. Together, we can make Big Sky a stable and livable community for all who desire to make Big Sky their home.

The Big Sky Community Food Bank Advisory Council, staff and volunteers would like to thank the community of Big Sky for your generosity in helping us realize our mission. Our clients have expressed their heartfelt gratitude time and again as we meet their needs in times of emergency.

For more information please email sarah@bigskyfoodbank.org or call (406) 995-3088.



Greater Yellowstone Coalition

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is a land of firsts: Home to Yellowstone, the world's first national park, the ecosystem also includes America's first national forest; the concept of Wilderness was conceived here, and it's the birthplace of an ecosystem-wide management approach. Greater Yellowstone is one of the world's only remaining intact ecosystems – it still holds all its wildlife species and natural processes from floods to fires – and Big Sky is nestled within it.

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition was founded more than 35 years ago with a mission to protect the lands, waters and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem now and for future generations. Our offices, strategically placed in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho, allow us to engage in a wide variety of efforts locally, regionally and nationally to ensure this wild heart of North America remains as magical as it is today.

We've had a historic year protecting Greater Yellowstone. Our supporters helped convince Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to withdraw mineral rights on



PHOTO BY GERRIT SU

30,000 acres north of Yellowstone for the next 20 years. We placed bear-proof food-storage containers on 164 campgrounds in Greater Yellowstone, helping keep bears wild and people safe. And we passed the first Wild and Scenic bill in Montana in more than 40 years, one that protects 20 miles of East Rosebud Creek that was signed into law in August.

GYC is committed to doing so much more. We are working to protect migration routes for wildlife, placing highway crossings in key places where elk, deer, moose and pronghorn typically cross roads; we are engaging with people in Big Sky and beyond to make the Gallatin River 200 percent cleaner by 2027; we are ensuring bison are restored to appropriate habitat outside the park; and we are committed to permanent protection of more than 200,000 acres on the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

All of our work requires support from readers like you. Help us achieve what we do best:

Protecting critical habitat and migration paths, ensuring forests remain healthy and wild, and restoring and reclaiming lands that need rehabilitation.

Keeping streams and lakes free flowing; ensuring clear and cold water; limiting energy development, dams and diversions, and protecting important watersheds.

Ensuring a thriving population of all iconic species, reducing on-the-ground conflicts with humans, and adding wildlife-friendly fencing and wildlife crossings.

Join us for our annual holiday party on Dec. 12 at our Bozeman office at 215 South Wallace Avenue, and learn more about what we do at greateryellowstone.org. Together, we all can make a difference for Greater Yellowstone.



Arts Council of Big Sky

Many Big Sky residents and visitors know the Arts Council of Big Sky from the Music in the Mountains free concert series, one of the most popular community events in Big Sky. But did you know that this is only a small part of what we do?

From educational outreach to public art, ACBS is the leading community arts organization in Big Sky. We want to make sure that as our community grows, the arts play a central role in community development. Big Sky is lucky in that our town is still being created and we have the rare chance to define what is important as we move forward. We've been around for 30 years and we're not resting on our laurels—we want to be out in front, leading by example.

This year was a defining one for our public art program. We recently installed the first outdoor, public sculpture in the state by renowned Montana artist Deborah Butterfield. A signature piece that will draw visitors from all over, "Winter" anchors the newly constructed Town Center Plaza in front of the Wilson Hotel. We also installed a beautiful reclaimed bison sculpture from Bozeman artist Kirsten Kainz, titled "Waldoza," in Town Center's Fire Pit Park. Finally, we are finishing up wrapping six utility boxes with local artwork as part of our annual Community Wrap Project. This is all part of our Public Art Master Plan, which is a multiyear project that identifies key locations around the community where public art can play a role.

Our education and outreach efforts continue to expand throughout the community. This past year, we offered three different painting workshops featuring well-known Western artists. Our ARTventure program offers Lone Peak High School students in grades 9-11 a chance to participate in engaging arts field trips, and creates a safe, artistic activity zone at our summer concerts that in 2018 alone served more than 1,000 younger kids. In conjunction with Humanities Montana, we brought our state Poet Laureate, Lowell Jaeger, to Big Sky where he spent two days with local students, taught a poetry workshop and hosted a poetry reading.

In addition to Music in the Mountains, we also produce the annual Big Sky Classical Music Festival, host a free performance of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, offer a weekend of documentaries as part of Mountainfilm in Big Sky, and create one of the most exciting arts events in the region at our annual Auction for the Arts fundraiser gala. Finally, we offer selected classical programs through our Schwer-Toepffer



PHOTO BY RICH ADDICKS

Memorial Fund, the annual Madrigal Dinner holiday event, and occasional programs at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center like International Guitar Night, coming in March of 2019.

The Arts Council could not do any of this without the support of individuals, businesses, local community foundations and the Big Sky Resort Area District. We also receive funding from state and national agencies, helping validate that what we do is important not only in Big Sky, but in Montana and beyond.

To find out more about the Arts Council, please visit bigskyarts.org.



Friends of Big Sky Education

We are the local nonprofit with the funky name, FOBSE. We are Friends of Big Sky Education and we promote the concept that "A better school builds a better community." The organization recently entered its 15th year of high-impact service to the Big Sky community and its public schools.

LPHS

The first initiative we undertook involved the lack of a local high school. Families with children attending or planning to attend Lone Peak High School can thank FOBSE for leading the initiative to open a high school here in Big Sky. FOBSE facilitated community conversation, prompted a required state statute change, and supported the school board's local ballots concerning a high school. FOBSE also raised funds when the district's bonding capacity would not cover all construction costs of the new high school.

Since 2009, LPHS educates our teenagers in their own community through exemplary programming and helps families remain in the local work force. Ninety percent of LPHS graduates pursue post-secondary study. Producing the top ACT scores in the state for the last two years, LPHS students are often accepted into highly competitive colleges.

WMPAC

Patrons at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center enjoy world-class professional performances and visual arts exhibits in a public arts venue designed and funded through FOBSE's efforts.

Since 2013, WMPAC, which operates under the guidance of FOBSE, connects high-caliber professional artists with our community and in our classrooms, as seen in the photo with Broadway actress Stephanie DiMaggio. The cultural center provides space and opportunity for our community's youth to experience quality training in the arts without driving through the canyon.

Football Field

Fans cheer our Miner and Big Horn teams under "Friday night lights" at a complex refurbished through FOBSE.

But FOBSE is not just about infrastructure. We support the community in other ways.

Community Scholarship Program

Our Community Scholarship Program is a conduit for local businesses, organizations and individuals to support LPHS grads that attend college or study trades. This project helps the community promote a culture of scholarship and provides an opportunity to tell students we are proud of them.



PHOTO BY MEGHAN BUECKING

The first scholarships were awarded to the Class of 2015. Over the past four years, 58 students have received \$182,000 in scholarships.

Superintendent's Fund

FOBSE provides grant-writing services to the school board and acts as a fiscal entity for donations to the Superintendent's Fund. These funding streams augment tax dollars to support exemplary programs that educate our students at the peak of excellence.

Donations to the Superintendent's Fund help the school board and superintendent toward sustainability of long-term strategic visions and plans including, for example, professional development for the International Baccalaureate Program. Recently, an anonymous \$20,000 contribution to the Superintendent's Fund covering an after-school tutoring program open to all students.

FOBSE initiatives are undertaken mainly through volunteer work and community donations. We are proud of our results.

We invite you to pitch in to build a better school and a better community by volunteering for or contributing to a FOBSE initiative. Contact Loren Bough at lorenbough@me.com or Anne Marie Mistretta at annemariamist@gmail.com. Or send an email to info@friendsofbigskyeducation.org.



Yellowstone Forever

We all know that Yellowstone National Park is an extraordinary place in every sense of the word: unbelievable views, magical geysers and hot springs, incredible wildlife and treasure-filled trails. But did you know that behind the scenes there are thousands of stewards helping to safeguard these wonders forever?

Yellowstone Forever is Yellowstone National Park's official education and fundraising nonprofit partner. Yellowstone Forever partners with the park to create opportunities for all people to experience, enhance and preserve Yellowstone, forever. Operations include the Yellowstone Forever Institute, 11 educational park stores and a community of Yellowstone enthusiasts who have committed to fund visitor education and park preservation.

The Institute's in-depth learning programs—available year round for visitors of all ages—together with Yellowstone Forever's educational products and services help people enjoy, understand and appreciate the wildlife, geology and cultural history of the park. These positive park experiences often translate to the desire to become stewards of the park, and Yellowstone Forever is building a broad network of supporters dedicated to preserving Yellowstone for future generations.



NPS PHOTO

Through this private support, Yellowstone Forever helps fund a variety of priority projects in the park. In 2018 alone, Yellowstone Forever provided \$5.9 million to support 53 projects such as native trout conservation, youth education and wildlife and visitor safety. Yellowstone Forever is also partnering with the National Park Service to build a new Yellowstone Youth Campus in the park. This environmentally advanced facility will be designed for the next generation of park stewards to have immersive educational experiences in Yellowstone.

There are many ways to become involved with Yellowstone Forever and support the world's first national park. You can participate in an Institute program, purchase a gift from a Yellowstone Forever Park Store, or volunteer your time or become a supporter. Individual donations are critical to funding priority projects, and Yellowstone's neighbors can play a direct role in supporting their "backyard park" with contributions of any size.

Much of the Greater Yellowstone region's economic vitality is attributed to the park and its healthy, thriving ecosystem. Visits to Yellowstone National Park begin in gateway communities, and most of the park's millions of annual visitors do more than simply pass through. They depend on the restaurants, lodging and other services provided in communities surrounding the park. In fact, last year visitors spent nearly \$500 million in these communities, such as Big Sky and West Yellowstone, and supported more than 7,000 jobs.

Many individuals, families and businesses have chosen to make their home in the Big Sky area because of its unparalleled access to public lands. Yellowstone, especially, is a favorite place to recreate and explore, or relax and renew. Becoming a supporter of Yellowstone Forever is a wonderful way to give back to the park that has given us all so much by helping to preserve it, now and forever.

Please visit yellowstone.org to give today and learn more about educational programs, volunteering, current projects and how to become a Yellowstone Forever supporter.



Eagle Mount

Since 1982, Eagle Mount has been transforming the lives of people with disabilities and children with cancer through a mission to provide therapeutic recreation for people in our community and beyond, so that "... they may mount up with wings as Eagles." Eagle Mount opens up a world of adventures—skiing, horseback riding, swimming, camping, rock climbing, kayaking, cycling, fishing and more—that foster freedom, joy, strength, focus, confidence and connection. For people living with a disability or cancer, recreation means a lot more than "play time"; recreational activities offer healing and life-affirming experiences. Our staff and volunteers focus on people's abilities, while gently supporting their disabilities. At Eagle Mount, every challenge inspires a new adventure.

Eagle Mount was the lifelong dream of General Robert C. Mathis, USAF (ret.) and his wife, Greta Gay Mathis, who envisioned a place where people with disabilities could enjoy all the amazing recreational opportunities Montana has to offer. Inspired by the courage, patience and determination of the people they served, the Mathises created not only recreational programs, but also a spirit of service that encourages able-bodied, skilled volunteers to assist those with special needs. Last year almost 2,000 individuals volunteered their time, spending 33,000 hours providing adventures for more than 2,000 individuals with disabilities.

Big Sky has hosted Eagle Mount's Big Sky Kids Adventure Camp, a camp for children eleven to eighteen living with cancer, for the last 33 years. There is a reason it is called Big Sky Kids; it wouldn't exist without this community.

More than 12 years ago, Eagle Mount hired their first full-time Big Sky staff member and now has a staff of three and over 100 volunteers working with the community to make sure anyone at any age and any ability has the opportunity to recreate in Big Sky. Last year we provided 515 lessons. Our Big Sky program also offers mono-ski camps as well as summer and winter camps for Montana's wounded veterans.

Funded exclusively through private donations, no one is ever turned away if they cannot pay for services and Eagle Mount offers scholarships to all who cannot afford the modest fees. About 60 percent of families are able to pay for our programs. In addition, honoring the wishes of the founders, the organization does not accept government funds. Eagle Mount would not be able to fulfill its mission without the kindness of private individuals, foundations and corporations.

None of Eagle Mount's programs would exist without the support of an extraordinary community, one that embraces people with disabilities and supports everyone's abilities. Eagle Mount is extremely fortunate to be a part of a community that supports its services through monetary donations, in-kind donations and volunteering.



PHOTO COURTESY OF EAGLE MOUNT

If you would like more information regarding Eagle Mount's programs, events or volunteer opportunities, or would like to support us through a donation, please visit our website at eaglemount.org or call at (406) 586-1781. And you can always stop by for a tour.



Alzheimer's Association

It isn't surprising that family members often recognize the first signs of developing Alzheimer's disease or dementia in a loved one during the holiday season. Family members and friends who have not seen one another for months or longer gather together, and the signs of memory loss or behavioral change become obvious.

The Alzheimer's Association's free and confidential 24/7 helpline sees its highest volume of calls at the end of each year. Changes in memory or behavior that seem gradual to those in daily contact can appear as abrupt declines in cognition to out-of-town visitors.

The Alzheimer's Association of Montana has developed a helpful checklist of five warning signs to aid in the early detection of Alzheimer's. Why is early detection important? Without it, the ones we love may wait too long to make necessary lifestyle changes that are important to ensure that all medical care options are explored, ranging from medications to research. Other considerations include personal safety as well as quality of care, and to make necessary financial and estate planning adjustments.

Here is a brief overview of five signs:

Memory loss that disrupts daily life. A typical age-related memory change is occasionally forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later. A common sign of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the early stages, is forgetting recently learned information like forgetting times or places, or forgetting where they are and how they got there.

Challenges in planning or solving problems. Making occasional errors, such as checkbook balancing, is not uncommon. If a person experiences changes in the ability to follow a plan or work with numbers, or has difficulty concentrating and completing a task, that may be a concern.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Difficulty completing familiar tasks or misplacing things. People with Alzheimer's may have trouble driving to a familiar location, managing a budget, remembering the rules of a familiar game or misplacing items.

Withdrawal from work or social activities. Some individuals may avoid being social because of changes they're experiencing, removing themselves from work projects, hobbies and sports.

Changes in mood and personality. Increased incidences of confusion, suspicion, depression, fear or anxiety can be a sign. Individuals can become more easily upset at home, work, with friends or in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

If you or someone you care about is experiencing any of the five warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, please contact the Alzheimer's Association of Montana's 24/7 Helpline at (800) 272-3900 for more information or visit alz.org. The helpline is staffed by trained professionals, even over the holidays, and offered at no charge.

The Alzheimer's Association of Montana is the leading source of information and support for the more than 20,000 Montanans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, their families and caregivers. Contributions help fund advancements in research to prevent, treat and eventually conquer this disease. The Alzheimer's Association advocates for those living with Alzheimer's and their families on related legislative issues, and with health and long-term care providers.

alzheimer's  association®

800.272.3900 | alz.org®

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