

Skiing the Cold Smoke

Thirty years of friendship formed at Bridger Bowl

BY BRITTANY YELEY

At Eagle Mount, there are endless opportunities for adventure, recreation, new experiences and friendship – some of which can last a lifetime.

Meet Scott - Scott's unique path to Eagle Mount was due to an automobile accident in July of 1989. Following the accident, Scott reemerged faced with new challenges. Learning to ski as a child in California, Scott refused to give up the sport following his diagnosis. "My physical therapist told me, "I know -you're used to doing the things you love in a certain way. Now you'll just be learning a new way to do those things," Scott recalls.

Scott didn't hesitate, joining the Eagle Mount ski program in January of 1990 following his September 1989 hospital release. His weekends were spent at Bridger Bowl and weekdays in our aquatics program, swimming a triathlon by the summer of 1991. "I was focused on developing strength after my extended hospital stay." Scott said. "By swimming I developed those back and arm muscles again, and skiing really helped the process too."

"What I've learned skiing with Scott is that sometimes you don't think – you just move. I think that is good in skiing and in life – it gets you to new terrain and new places."

Now, meet Greg - what started out for Greg as a sign-up to reap the benefit of a free lift ticket in 1991, would lead to a friendship that would last over thirty years. Greg and Scott were paired for the Eagle Mount ski season of 1992-1993. "The first memories of skiing with Scott were adventurous" Greg remembered. "He was always up to trying something new, always looking to push the limits, always up for trying new places to ski."

Their similar personalities and appetite for experiences led their friendship to extend beyond Bridger Bowl the very next season; adventuring to ski together at Big Sky, Blacktail, Red Lodge and Big Mountain. As the years rolled forward, life unfolded for both Greg and Scott. All the cornerstones of growing up unfolded before them; marriage (they were both in one another's weddings), kids, the various shuffles of zip codes for professional advancement – but their time spent at Eagle Mount remained a constant for thirty years. Even today, despite the ever-changing landscape of life, Greg could be found driving through the pass every Saturday, headed to Bridger Bowl to ski with Scott.



Greg and Scott pose for a photo at Bridger Bowl. Greg, Left. Scott, right.

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Sue Pederson - Donor Spotlight

Sue Pederson and Greta Mathis bonded over their passion for teaching and their shared love for children with special needs. Sue found that participating at Eagle Mount was both motivating and rewarding. It encouraged her to become involved in multiple levels of the programs at Eagle Mount, starting with the aquatics program, skiing, and the Crystal Ball. Sue joined the Board of Eagle Mount where she served 13 years, being the Board President for a term. "Eagle Mount doesn't just provide adventurous, active experiences to our participants. Families meet and become friends that support each other. Volunteers learn as much as they give. It is so exciting to watch Eagle Mount continue to grow and provide therapeutic recreation to ALL." Sue said.

"Eagle Mount is an amazing, loving community. My heart strings are tied and will always be to Eagle Mount."



Sue taught special and elementary education for eighteen years and supervised student teachers at MSU before retiring. She now spends her time with family and friends, kayaking, traveling, skiing or at her cabin in Big Fork.

Building Strong Communities: The Murdoch's and Eagle Mount partnership

If you've been to Eagle Mount, you've likely seen the Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply logo around campus, but you might not be aware of the deep roots we share with the company.

John Murdoch, Murdoch's Home and Ranch Supply founder, began volunteering with the Eagle Mount aquatics program when swim lessons were held at local Bozeman hotels in the early 1990's. Passionate about our mission, he served on the board from 2008-2012 and encouraged his employees to get involved.

"If you think about our mission - admiration, respect and smiles - the key things we focus on, to me - when I think about the population that Eagle Mount serves - and the portion that's crossover - is respect." said Tory Atkins, Murdoch's Chief Human Resources Officer. "it's about finding populations that don't have the opportunity to overcome barriers because of the social stigma that goes along with - whether it's a cancer survivor, a veteran, or a person with disabilities. It's not hard to open your heart to organizations that serve that purpose."

Although Murdoch's is expanding, now spread across 37 markets and growing, the mission and core values remain the core of their operations, recently hiring a role that will manage their philanthropic requests.



"It's part of Murdoch's pillars to serve, and that's not just out of our stores - but the people who are in our communities."

Eagle Mount is continually grateful to have Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply as a corporate partner and look forward to continuing to share joy in the Eagle Mount mission for many years to come.

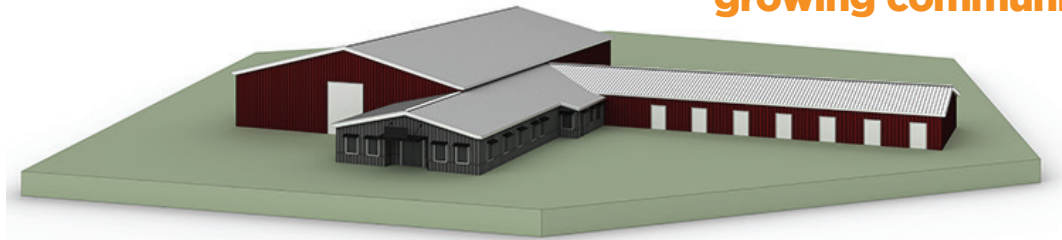


Expanding Horizons: Eagle Mount's Horsemanship Education Center Project

BY BRITTANY YELEY

It's hard to believe the first adaptive horsemanship lesson at Eagle Mount was nearly forty years ago. Horses have long symbolized freedom, strength, courage, confidence and triumph – qualities synonymous with the founding principles of Eagle Mount. Although the Eagle Mount mission has taken flight since those early days, adding additional programs, the adaptive horsemanship program has remained an integral part of the Eagle Mount spirit.

“Expanding the Horsemanship building will allow us to offer more effective, engaging, and educational experiences to our growing community”



An architectural rendering of the Adaptive Horsemanship Education expansion. The portion highlighted in black is the new addition to our current facility.

The horsemanship program began in 1989, serving 50 participants. Last year, the program served 143 participants alongside 96 volunteers for 1,228 lessons and is growing every year. What might have been a mere dream to the Eagle Mount founders and early team of volunteers and staff is now a reality thanks to the Eagle Mount community.

“The Adaptive Horsemanship program has been an Eagle Mount cornerstone for forty years because of the honest, non-judgmental feedback that horses give participants” said Claire Brunner, adaptive horsemanship program director. “To be atop a horse is a self-esteem building and liberating recreational experience. The opportunity to call a thousand-pound animal a teammate is empowering for participants who often experience mobility and cognitive challenges in their day-to-day life.”

Eagle Mount is committed to continually serving a growing community and offering individualized lessons to our participants. We're proud to announce that in 2023 we're undertaking a project to expand the existing barn space into the Horsemanship Education Center, allowing our mission to soar higher.

This project will grow the current participant facility from a one-room gear-up space into a 2650 sqft center with

multiple specifically designed, functional spaces. This addition will allow Eagle Mount's nationally accredited horsemanship program to better meet the unique needs of our participants. It's the dedication to serving our community that puts this project on the forefront in 2023.

A few improvements worthy of mention are a new sensory room, a physical movement room and a dedicated education space that will provide high-quality experiences for riders while enabling Eagle Mount to expand programming.

This Horsemanship Education Center expansion will also better support our year-round programming efforts. For example, a heated feed and tack room alongside an energy efficient mechanical room and the thoughtful design of this space will reduce our annual operating costs by an estimated \$15k per year. We're excited to be embarking on this project and what the completion will mean for our community. The goal for this project is one million for Construction, equipment and establishing. As of May 15th, we have secured 50% of our funding and hope to break ground this fall. If you're interested in learning more and seeing our plan mock-ups, visit our website at eaglemount.org or call Kevin for a tour at 406-586-1781. We'd love to show you the plans personally.



An architectural rendering of the Adaptive Horsemanship Education Centers' Lobby.



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When asked how they've managed to maintain their friendship throughout the years, Greg recalls, "when you talk to Scott you don't hear about what he can't do. You hear about what he wants to do, what he can do, what we're going to do, and he's never been afraid to ask for what he needs help with, but there's never any limitation on possibility. That influence has long transferred to my personal and professional life."

To the same question Scott smiles and says, "We're both wild, crazy and up for adventures. If you are wild and have considered signing up for Eagle Mount programming - I bet, they'll be able to find you someone they way they matched Greg with me."

Eagle Mount is proud to be a consistent pillar of the Bozeman community. We strive to provide ongoing adaptive recreation for years to come, so friendships like Scott and Gregs can continue to form throughout the next generation of volunteers, participants and staff. We've long believed in the life changing power of recreation, and it wouldn't be possible without our generous community. Check out their story on video at the Eagle Mount YouTube channel today.



Greg and Scott ski a run at Bridger Bowl.

Unleashing London's Potential: The Magic of Eagle Mount

If you walked into the Murdoch's Indoor Arena on Thursday afternoons, you'd find London circling the arena with Molly, her go-to equine partner. You wouldn't see the road that has led London to Eagle Mount, you'd see only an eight-year-old whose concentrating on the track with Molly.

"London is the type of kid that would normally slip through the cracks" said her mother, Ally. "Although she's high functioning, she's long struggled with cognitive problems. At one point she was on the spectrum for panic disorder - thankfully now she is not. Her challenges filtered out most age- appropriate activities in Oregon - there just aren't any options out there for kids like London. Bozeman is incredibly unique because of Eagle Mount."

"There is just no place like Eagle Mount" Ally said, "Eagle Mount has changed her life, and in turn -changed our life."

A daughter of two snow enthusiasts, Ally was eager to share her love of skiing with London, so she called the Eagle Mount ski program first. The beginning of her journey at Bridger Bowl marked drastic change for London. The program paired London with an occupational therapist volunteer, someone who was able to understand and help London navigate the mountain, and before long she was skiing confidentially.

Following skiing, London was enrolled in the Eagle Mount aquatics program. "Before enrolling, she wouldn't even get near water, let alone swim," said her mom. "Now she swims, and her confidence is through the roof, Eagle Mount

has provided her with that on-ramp to participate, and she wouldn't be doing any of these activities without that." However, Eagle Mount's adaptive horsemanship program felt like the biggest obstacle for London. "She has been really nervous around Horses - a huge reason we got her into horsemanship is for her executive functioning," said her mom. The first day after her evaluation- she was up on the horse. "She was calm, relaxed, satisfied after her first lesson. I have never seen her that way before - the horsemanship program has shifted her unlike anything else." said Ally.



Adaptive Horsemanship Director, Claire (left), working with London (center) to navigate her horse partner, Molly



We Need Your Support!

Donations make Eagle Mount adventure possible!

A gift to Eagle Mount isn't just a gift to an organization - it's support for joy, adventure, connection, strength, confidence, and so much more!

Donate

Eagle Mount's wide array of programs, activities, events, and groups are made possible by the generosity of our community of donors. With an annual budget of more than \$3,000,000, Eagle Mount needs your support to make our mission come alive. Donations of \$10,000, \$1000, \$100, and \$10 each make a special impact on the work we are able to do. **Thank you for the important gifts you give!**

Sponsor

Sponsors support Eagle Mount's mission, underwrite specific programs, and also make Eagle Mount's premier events possible. We are grateful for the more than 150 corporate, foundation, individual and family sponsors who partner each year with us.

Volunteer

What's more valuable than your time? Eagle Mount is only possible because of the time and expertise of our volunteers. **THANK YOU!**

Participate, Volunteer, and Donate today at eaglemount.org

Cash gifts, gifts of appreciated stock, grants, sponsorships, bequests, volunteer hours and in-kind donations all make Eagle Mount programming possible.

Eagle Mount Specialty Plates

For just \$20 per year, you can proudly display your support for Eagle Mount. Remember us when you register or renew your Montana plates this year!

Thrivents Choice

You can direct an annual contribution through your Thrivent Financial member services to Eagle Mount.

Employer Matching Gifts

Many companies offer a matching gift program to encourage philanthropy among their employees. You may be able to double, or even triple the impact of your gift! Check with your Human Resources department to see if your employer has a matching gift program.



SAVE THE DATE FOR

EVENTS



June 10th, 2023 - Western Rendezvous

Help us kick off summer with Western Rendezvous! Come and enjoy raising your paddle to support our mission in the live auction and kicking up your boots to live music by the Western Skies Band. Seating is open to a family-style setting, with reserved tables for eight and ten available. Tickets are available at eaglemount.org and at the door.

For more information, visit us online or email events@eaglemount.org



August 25 & 26th, 2023 - Digger Days

Join us this summer at Digger Days! Bring your family and come experience life in the driver's seat of the biggest, baddest construction equipment under the shadow of the Bridger Mountains! Children of all ages are welcome. Tickets will be available starting August 1 and at the door.

For more information, visit us online or email events@eaglemount.org



November 4, 2023 - Crystal Ball

The Gallatin Valley's first and most elegant black-tie gala, Eagle Mount's Crystal Ball provides donors with an evening like no other. At this event, guests enjoy a hosted bar, a three-course dinner, a live and silent auction, and an after-party with dancing and lively music. On top of it all, The Crystal Ball provides vital support to Eagle Mount's mission; continuing to make adventure possible!



Summer 2023 Program Information out Now!

There's nothing like a Montana summer! The best way to stay up-to-date on participating and volunteering with Eagle Mount is to reference our website at EagleMount.org. Included on each program page is information about program days, times, and costs, along with policies and details about signing up. We hope to see you on the trails, at the river, and on campus throughout the summer months.



BECAUSE OF YOU

Volunteers Give us Wings



Sandee Mills: Recreation Volunteer and Board Member

Sandee's Eagle Mount journey began in 1987 when she began volunteering with the horse and ski programs. Her daughter, Storey, became an Eagle Mount kid at a young age. A few years after her daughter passed away, Sandee continued her involvement and was a board member from 2008 to 2010. Sandee eventually made it back to the barn and ski hill, being selected the teaching team, where she earned an adaptive ski instructor credential. Currently she's writing a memoir about Storey and their journey (anyone know of a good agent?). Her son Hayden and husband, John, have also volunteered with Eagle Mount. Sandee is very passionate about Eagle Mount and recently re-joined the board of directors.



Emma: Family Engagement Volunteer

Emma has been a rockstar Eagle Mount volunteer for four years and counting. Focusing almost entirely on family engagement and arts programs, Emma has volunteered for adult night out, family events, sibling workshops, theater and so much more. A freshman in the nursing program at MSU, Emma keeps busy outside of her time at Eagle Mount. "Eagle Mount is such a positive escape for me," Emma said. "I love all of the participants and the atmosphere of Eagle Mount." "I really love the theater program so much," Emma said. "The creativity is so inspiring!" The Eagle Mount mission wouldn't be possible without our dedicated volunteers, like Emma. Thanks so much for your commitment, Emma!



Felix: Camp Braveheart Volunteer

One of our dedicated volunteers is Felix, whose engagement with Eagle Mount began in the horsemanship program upon his relocation to Bozeman. A retired agricultural economist from Northern Virginia, Felix will never forget the day he arrived in Bozeman and signed his daughter up at Eagle Mount. "We were welcomed with open arms and the whole family signed up for the horsemanship program that day. Ruth as a participant, my wife and I as volunteers." Although Felix started out volunteering in our horsemanship program in 2014, he has since volunteered for many other programs including Camp Braveheart, horticulture, cycling and aquatics. When asked what inspired him to continue his involvement with Eagle Mount, Felix said "seeing the smiles on the participants faces. I've volunteered for Camp Braveheart a few times and I'm usually the first guy with a tear in my eye. It's pretty touching to see families join and talk about their situations but also to forget about what they have been through and just have fun." Lastly, Felix notes: "If you're considering volunteering, do not hesitate. Don't be afraid to get out of your comfort zone!"

Thanks for everything you do for Eagle Mount, Felix!

Each year Eagle Mount needs over 600 volunteers to carry out our mission! Learn more or sign up today at eaglemount.org

