

Montana Hope Project

Sponsored by the Association of Montana Troopers



Child of Hope: Joslynn

“The Bears that Care”

DECEMBER 2013

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Deborah Butler

Wishes:

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EVENTS

Hope Project Reunions

Tiana Hader

Ride for Hope

Dave Evans

Lake Mary Ronan ATV Ride

Royce Bird

Big Sky Bird and Birdie

Tyson Schwartz & Luke Studer

Duck Duck Goose! Benefit

Kristie Sotelo & Craig Duff

Santa at the Sweets Barn

Del Ruggles, Kirk & Gayle Martin

Dave & Bonnie Aicher

Billings Banquet & Magic Show

Dawn White

NV Eagles Golf Tournament

Jay Beranek

Lightning McQueen & Tow Mater

Joe Johnson

Montana Hope Project PSA

MAPS Media Institute, Peter Rosten

Your event/benefit not listed here?
Please consider submitting your story to the
editor at ksangray@montanahope.org.
We'd be happy to tell the world of your
support of the Hope Project!

NEWSLETTER FACTS

Newsletter Designer:

Kathy Sangray

Our Writers:

Glen Barcus MHP 245, Richard Hader MHP 160, Kathy Sangray, Dave Evans, Perry Backus (Ravalli Republic), James Redmond (The Mountain Mail), Candace Chase (The Daily Inter Lake), Jan Falstad (Billings Gazette), Eddie Gregg (Billings Gazette), John Grant Emeigh (Montana Standard), Matt Rule (Bozeman Chronicle)

Our Shutterbugs:

Victoria Wojciechowski (Creative Vision), Perry Backus (Ravalli Republic), Patrick Cote (Daily Inter Lake), Paul Ruhter (Billings Gazette), John Paul Schmidt (Havre Daily News), Larry Mayer (Billings Gazette), Mike Green (Bozeman Chronicle) & many courtesy photos if not credited.



Montana
Hope Project

HOPE FACTS

Montana Hope Project
PO Box 5927
Helena, MT 59604

www.montanahope.org

We are NOT affiliated with any national organization.

We follow all federal guidelines to maintain our status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit registered with the Secretary of State.

90 cents of every dollar raised benefits Montana children.

We have granted 364 wishes to date since 1984.

Every year wish recipients and their families are invited to join us for a summer and winter reunion.

Wishes are funded entirely by your donations & fund-raising.

Submit stories to:
Kathy Sangray
1975 US Hwy 287 N
Cameron, MT 59720
ksangray@montanahope.org

President's Message *by Richard Hader*



Photo by Victoria Wojciechowski

2013 has been another busy year for the Montana Hope Project. We will end the year granting 15 wishes and start off 2014 with 10 children on our wish list with 3 already booked for travel in January and February. I think that when the project started back in 1984, no one had any idea of just how big and successful it would become.

We also said a final goodbye to two long-time and important individuals to the project. Retired patrolman Bob Marshall, who was the builder of our wagons that we gave away for years at the summer reunion, passed away after a long illness. Bob also spearheaded the drive to bring the horses and wagon to the reunion. They have been popular ever since.

Montana's own famous artist and story teller, Stan Lynde, also passed away this summer. Stan was the man behind "Rick O'Shay" and "Latigo" that ran nationally for years. As everyone knows and can see on our famous "Bears that Care" logo, Stan was the man that drew it. Over the years he drew several more versions of the bear that met our needs at the time. Stan was a true Montana gentleman. Both of these great men will be missed and may they rest in peace.

2014 will mark our 30th year in granting wishes. Since 1984, we have been able to make dreams come true for 364 children and their families. None of this would be possible without the generous support we continue to receive from individuals and businesses that allows us to grant wishes. To everyone over all these years that have stepped up and gave their time and finances to us, THANK YOU!!!

2013 WISHES

Teagan	Disney World	Missoula
Joshua	Paint Truck	Billings
Isaiah	Pop-Up Camper	Fishtail
Shayla	Shopping Spree	Billings
Katie	Disney World	Great Falls
Levi	Disney World	Pinesdale
Elizabeth	Disney World	Corvallis
Mikenna	Disney World	Butte
Skyler	Munchkin Kitten	Plentywood
Aspen	Disney World	Belgrade
Seth	Disney World	Harlem
Carter	Disney World	Helena
Mason	Disney World	Hamilton
Joslynn	Disney World	Billings
Koltin	Disney World	Helena

BOB MARSHALL 10/20/34 - 8/17/13



Robert James Marshall passed quietly at Lakeview Care Center in Big Fork August 17, 2013, due to complications from Parkinson's Disease and Louie Body Dementia. A graveside inurnment will take place at the Bethel Lutheran Church Cemetery in the spring.

He was born October 20, 1934 in Missoula, Montana to Robert S. Marshall and Lillie (Mackie) Marshall. He started operating construction equipment for Bud King at the age of 15 around Ravalli, Montana where he lived with his parents. He attended school at St Ignatius then went on to earn a Drafting degree from Northern Montana College. He continued to drive heavy trucks for Baltrusch trucking, hauling loads to Minneapolis on weekends while going to school.

From 1955-1957 Bob served as a combat engineer in Europe driving trucks hauling heavy equipment throughout France, Spain and other European countries during the reconstruction after WWII. He rose to the rank of Specialist 3rd class. Bob later served in the local Company D 2-163rd Cavalry National Guard unit in Shelby for 14 years as the E-6 (Staff Sergeant) motor sergeant.

When he returned he attended Montana State University and met his future wife Charlotte Keil. During this time at college, Bob operated heavy scrapers during the construction of the Noxon dam, and he graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Industrial Arts.

In 1958 Bob and Charlotte married and Bob pursued a career in the Montana Highway Patrol graduating in the class of 1961. For the following year, Bob worked on a highway survey crew for the Gardner, Polebridge and other highway projects. Then Bob was assigned with the Highway Patrol in Missoula and later transferred to Culbertson and Havre.

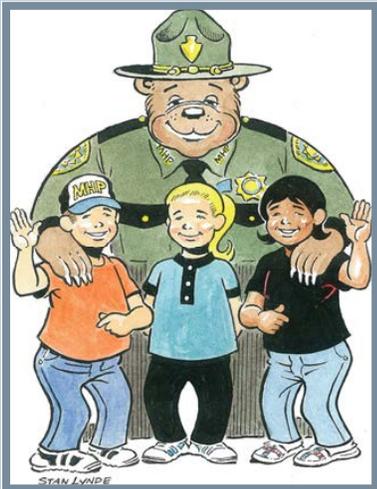
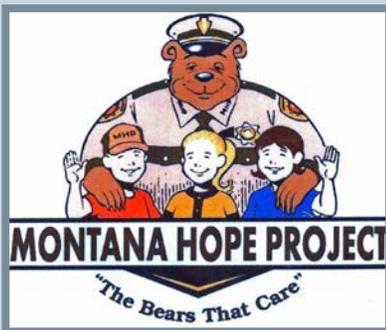
In 1967 Bob and Charlotte bought a farm east of Oilmont. In addition to farming Bob would serve as a reserve Deputy at the Marias fair for many years at the jockey gate. He also worked construction for several years running scrapers when the Minute Man sites were being built and ran graders for highway projects. Bob loved his heavy equipment, especially his caterpillars. He was also very proud of his pit bull dogs.

Bob was active with the Montana Highway Patrol HOPE Project annual Essex reunion providing tricycles and hand-built pull wagons for recipients. Bob and Charlotte also provided horse drawn wagon rides for the event annually until he was unable to participate.

Bob stayed busy and battled through his Parkinson's by building and restoring the 1800's spring wagons with Charlotte. They also co-authored a book about bringing these beautiful pieces of history back to life. Bob was especially proud of his sheep herder's wagon.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents, Robert S. and Lillie, and is survived by his wife Charlotte; brother Don; children Clay of South Carolina, Ward of Bigfork, and Gwen of Sunburst; and a grandson, Thomas of Savannah, GA.

STAN LYNDE 9/23/1931 - 8/6/2013



On August 6, 2013 the Montana Hope Project lost a long-time supporter, Stan Lynde. Stan willingly lent his artistic talents to various fund-raising efforts of the Montana Hope Project and the Highway Patrol Association along with designing the logo for the Project.

Stan was born Myron Stanford Lynde on Sept. 23, 1931, in Billings and grew up listening to his parents read him the Sunday comics from the Billings Gazette. From an early age he dreamed of being a cartoonist.

He attended the University of Montana until he joined the Navy during the Korean conflict. During his time in the Navy, Stan created the comic strip "Ty Foon." In the 1950's Stan went to New York City and worked his way up to commodities reporter for the Wall Street Journal while he studied at the School of Visual Arts at night.

Stan gained fame in 1958, with his syndicated western comic strip "Rick O'Shay", which ran for 20 years in major newspapers and reached about 15 million readers. Lawman Rick O'Shay, gunslinger Hipshot Percussion, banker Mort Gage and a kid named Quyat Burp lived in the western town of Connip-tion.

In 1962 "Rick O'Shay" was appearing in about 100 newspapers, including The Times. Stan then returned to Billings and bought a 160-acre ranch where he branded his cattle with "RIK" in honor of Rick O'Shay. A drawing Lynde made of a bronc has served as Billings Senior High's school logo since the 1970s.

In 1977 Stan was in a contract dispute with his syndicate and he stopped drawing "Rick O'Shay". From 1979 to 1983, Stan produced "Latigo," a comic strip about an Old West lawman.

When Lynde retired from cartooning, he wrote eight western novels featuring the character Merlin Fanshaw, a lawman. He also published "Vigilante Moon," a historical novel about Montana, in 2002. In 2004, Lynde designed the new patch for the Montana division of the U.S. Marshals Service.

In 2007 Stan attended the Hope Project's summer reunion and posed for pictures with our truck with the logo he designed and with the Children of Hope. Stan graciously signed autographs and personalized his artwork for Hope families.

The Montana Hope Project is honored by our association with a true gentleman. Stan will be sadly missed.

SANTA *at the* SWEETS BARN

EVENT SPONSORS:

Del Ruggles

Kirk & Gail Martin

David & Bonnie Aicher



Santa with Child of Hope, Jason, and his little brother Erik

Santa has lots of helpers, and a big-hearted one with a soft spot for children lives in Missoula and works for Century Link Communications. Del Ruggles portrays Santa Claus every year at Christmas time while going to private parties, daycares, schools and churches. Del has been Santa for the Missoula Police Department, Montana Lady Griz Basketball, Helena Elks, Knights of Columbus, Parents without Partners, YWCA Women's shelter along with other organizations.

For the past three years, Del has donated his time and talents to raise money for the Montana Hope Project while teaming up with Kirk & Gail Martin and David & Bonnie Aicher, owners of the Sweets Barn in Lolo and Bozeman, MT. Del sets up a little Christmas scene in the store, then he gets the word out with fliers and radio ads that Santa will be available for pictures.

Families can come see Santa and take pictures with their own cameras. Monetary donations are accepted on behalf of the Montana Hope Project. To double his efforts, Del applies for a matching grant from Century Link's Clarke M. Williams Foundation.



LAKE MARY RONAN

EVENT SPONSORS:

Royce Bird

Mike Doran & Meg McLaughlin

ATV RIDE



Another successful ATV ride was hosted by Lake Mary Ronan Lodge on June 15th. Almost 200 ATVs showed up to enjoy the beautiful day and ride in parts of the mountains that are only open once a year for this event; thanks to Plum Creek Lumber for allowing this to happen. After the ride, a terrific dinner was served at the Lake Mary Ronan Lodge. Thanks go out to Meg McLaughlin and Mike Doran and all their helpers for making this another great event.

On July 13, 2013 riders left from the usual six starting points and headed to our destination, Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. I have ridden in several of the Rides for Hope but this was my most exciting, my first year coordinating the Ride for the Montana Hope Project.

Our participation is back on the rise again after a couple of years of diminished numbers and all of us are working to continue that trend. This year more than fifty motorcycles arrived at Fairmont, some solo riders and others rolling in "two up". Forty motorcycles cruised through Anaconda in the parade and returned to the banquet where we were treated to an awesome description of the gift to Disney World narrated by parents, Jason and Bridget, and Wish Kid, Samantha, after dinner.

As always, Dave McCormack, Royce Bird and Wes Mattson crushed the competition with their pledges. Dave alone brought in more than \$24,000 and the three totaled over \$40,000 of the \$68,000 we received for the kids this year. Thank you also to Myron Redfield for his fund-raising efforts and his fourth place finish.

The 2014 Ride for Hope is scheduled for July 12, 2014 ending in Hamilton, MT. I have traveled to Hamilton twice to talk with the host hotel, the TownHouse Inn, and to explain our mission to the local Chamber of Commerce and local law enforcement. Everyone is on board to show us their hospitality and a great time for this, our 25th Annual Ride for Hope. I spoke with Rich Hader about the cruise giveaway that I missed and it was decided to give away two cruises in Hamilton, one for the missed cruise this year and one to commemorate this milestone of the 25th year of the Ride. All of the eligible donations will be added up to increase the riders' chances of winning.

Thank you to everyone for welcoming me as the new Coordinator and for all your support to me and the Hope Project kids. As always, our host hotel, Fairmont Hot Springs Resort was very accommodating and our sponsors, Enterprise Rent a Car, Town Pump and others too numerous to list, gave us a wonderful experience. See you in Hamilton in July 2014.

BY DAVE EVANS



Fairmont Hot Springs



Myron, Wes, Royce & Dave



Bridget, Samantha & Jason

Volunteers Flock to the Hope Project

Volunteers make the Hope Project. Each year the Project is the recipient of the volunteer efforts of various groups and individuals across the state. Service clubs designate proceeds to help grant wishes; business owners experience the Hope Project through family or friends and want to help. The following volunteers took the initiative this year and planned events on their own for the benefit of the Hope Project. Their efforts are greatly appreciated and we'd like to acknowledge their hard work and offer them our heart felt gratitude for all they do for the Children of Hope in Montana.

If you would like to organize an event to benefit the Hope Project, go for it! If you want some help, find the area coordinator contact information at www.montanahope.org.

Birds, Birdies, Eagles, Ducks & Geese for the Project!

Duck Duck Goose!

Duck Duck Goose!, owned by Kristie Sotelo & Craig Duff, is an online and mobile pop-up store based in Great Falls that sells vintage and retro school items. They donated 10% of their sales to the Hope Project. Check out their sites at www.facebook.com/duckduckgoose.mt and www.etsy.com/shop/MidCenturyMontana

Big Sky Bird & Birdies

Tyson Schwartz and Luke Studer teamed up in Billings to raise money for the Hope Project with their event. Participants enjoyed a Sporting Clay Shoot at Blue Creek Sport Shooting Complex and then a Golf Scramble at Eagle Rock Golf Course. This event raised \$16,000 for the Montana Hope Project.

NV Eagles Golfing

The NV Eagles Club in Columbia Falls put on a Golf Tournament in West Glacier in September. Participants enjoyed the shotgun start golf scramble and then dinner at the Eagles club. Prizes were awarded for the longest drive, closest to the pin, longest putt, and best and worst score.

SUMMER "FUN"

REUNION



Barbeque



Heli-Tours



Picnic Lunch



Jammers



Ice Cream



Lake McDonald



Izaak
Walton
Inn

Give Kids the World

The enchanting place in Kissimmee, Florida called “Give Kids The World” began with a simple wish of a little girl name Amy, and the desire of one man, Henri Landwirth, to make that wish come true.

Amy had leukemia and a wish to visit the theme parks in Orlando. Henri was a hotelier in the Orlando area who gladly offered a complimentary stay. Unfortunately, the remainder of Amy's travel plans took too long to arrange and her wish was never granted before Amy passed away. This unfulfilled wish inspired Henri to make a vow that no child in need would ever be failed again.

Henri enlisted the support of colleagues in the hospitality and theme park industry to assist him in bringing these special families to Central Florida within 24 hours if need be. He called the project “Give Kids The World,” because that is just what he intended to do; provide memorable, magical, cost-free experiences to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

As the program expanded and the number of families continued to grow, it was apparent that Give Kids The World would need to create a place that could better serve the special needs of families. The gates of Give Kids The World Village opened in 1989.

Today the Village is a 70-acre resort complete with over 140 Villa accommodations, entertainment attractions, whimsical venues, and fun specifically designed for children with special needs. Many Montana Hope Project wish recipients that choose Disney World have stayed at Give Kids the World.

With the help of many generous individuals, corporations and partnering wish-granting organizations, such as the Montana Hope Project, Give Kids The World has welcomed more than 122,000 families from all 50 states and over 74 countries.

Give Kids The World depends on volunteers, known as Angels, to fulfill approximately 1,200 volunteer shifts every week to assist with resort operations, entertainment programs and completing special projects that ensure each family has a perfect guest experience.

Angel for the Day

By Kathy Sangray



In February 2013, my family and I traveled to Give Kids the World to volunteer for the day and find out exactly what it was all about. I could never have imagined such a magical place and volunteering was a special privilege. My son, Kaden, and I started the day helping serve breakfast at the Gingerbread House Restaurant. It has child-sized tables that are decorated with 27,000 real peppermint candies, and over 2,000 dolls from around the world given by "Angels" (GKTW volunteers.) It was a pleasure to wait on wish families and to see their smiles of appreciation.

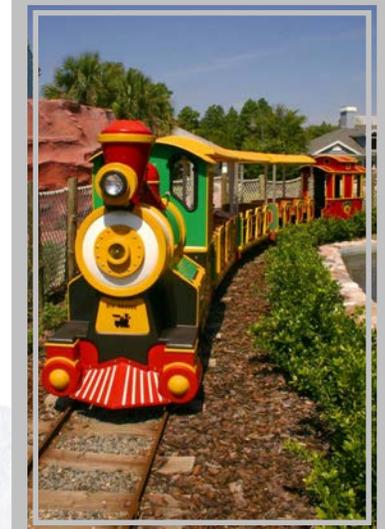


My next assignment was at Amberville Train Station, which includes a huge model railroad, remote-controlled boats, video arcade, billiards, and miniature



golf. After one dry run on JJ's Express, I was a certified engineer and was thrilled when a family stopped by for a ride.

The highlight of my day as an Angel was at the Castle of Miracles. Each wish child receives a star that they put their name on, and they excitedly bring their star to the castle to give to the Star Fairy. With the help of an Angel, the star is placed in a special box. That night, the Star Fairy puts the star up in the galaxies on the ceiling in the castle and in the Star Tower. Every wish child that has ever visited GKTW has their star on the ceiling. All children that come to GKTW also get a handmade pillow from the magic pillow tree. You must talk to the resident owl and shake the tree very carefully and then magically enough pillows for all the children in the family appear. When it is time for bed, the talking clock sings the children a good night song.



It was such a privilege to serve at GKTW. If your travel plans take you to Orlando, Florida, consider being an Angel for the day.



"We are Montana Hope"

Children of Hope Star in Media Production

Check out our new PSA at www.mapsmediainstitute.com

Peter Rosten, the founder of MAPS in Darby, MT produced the PSA pro-bono as part of their "Give Back" program. Volunteers helped stage the production and several Montana Highway Patrolmen co-starred with Children of Hope; Melina, Kaiden, Jason and Anitra.

MAPS started as an accredited art class in the Corvallis High School in 2004 and has now evolved into an after-school program serving all five Ravalli County high schools. Now celebrating its 10th anniversary, MAPS students continue to create and produce personal projects and award-winning media for a variety of national, statewide and local clients. Their projects include public service announcements, commercials, documentaries, websites, photography, motion graphics, posters, fliers, and print ads.

Be sure to get autographs if you see the Troopers pictured at right: Luke Burson, Rocky Bailey, Jim Kitchen, Lath Keith, and Brenda Timm with Anitra and Jason. Also in the PSA was Richard Salois.



Anitra



Kaiden



Melina



Jason



Magic City Magic Show



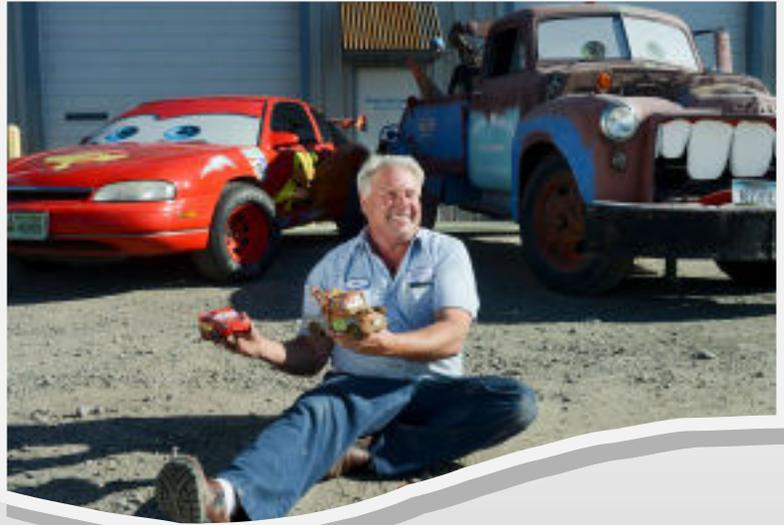
Billings area coordinator, Dawn White, decided to change things up a bit this year from the annual banquet and auction. This year she hosted magician and musician, Jay Scott Berry.

The event was held at the Shrine Auditorium and was a full evening of dinner and entertainment. Jay Scott Berry is known for his up-close magic and sleight of hand tricks. During dinner he strolled through the tables and performed small magic tricks at each table. He then put on an hour long magic show for the crowd.

"Cars" Raising Cash

Best Rate Towing & Repair owner, Joe Johnson, has been getting attention from people traveling along Amsterdam Road in Belgrade after he converted two cars into Disney animated feature "Cars" characters.

Three years ago, Joe found himself in Billings, where a tow-truck was up for auction. *"I couldn't help but see Tow Mater in it,"* the Belgrade resident said. *"So I bought it."*



Just a few months later, Johnson and his Best Rate Towing employees were dedicating more and more of their free time to work on Tow Mater, the popular redneck character from the kids movie "Cars." *"Even if they had worked hard all day, they were more than happy to help out,"* Johnson said. *"When Tow Mater was finished, kids all over started visiting him outside our shop. They would just hangout around the car after school and have a blast."*

Tow Mater was so popular that Johnson decided to create the next life-size replica from the "Cars" movie, Lightning McQueen. A red coupe, his son's old racing tires and a few months of hard work produced Lightning McQueen, who is now parked next to Tow Mater at his shop along Amsterdam Road.

The two "Cars" characters are rented out for local birthday parties and to day-cares. The Gallatin Speedway in Belgrade also showcases the vehicles before races on Fridays. *"The kids love seeing both the cars brought to life before the races start,"* Johnson said. *"They go crazy."* Johnson, who has volunteered for the Central Valley Fire Department for 16 years, donates all earnings from the cars to the Montana Hope Project.

His next "Cars" project *"may involve the Peterbilt truck sitting out front of the shop."* Could Mack be joining the group?

Story and Picture by Matt Rule and Mike Greener, Bozeman Chronicle

Teagan



DJ



Claire



COURTESY PHOTOS

LEVI'S WISH

By Perry Backus, Ravalli Republic

Levi's dream of boarding an airplane and watching a whale officially arrived Monday, accompanied by cupcakes and a stuffed teddy bear. The Corvallis first-grader's brothers, sisters and mom were there as well to savor the moment brought to the Pinesdale family by the Montana Hope Project.

Montana Highway Patrol Trooper Rocky Bailey presented the family with some spending money and a camera for their all-expense-paid trip to Disney World later this month. *"This family is exactly the type of circumstance the Montana Hope Project was created to serve,"* he said.

Levi and his twin brothers, Aaron and Allen, have been diagnosed with the rare genetic disorder called Giant Axonal Neuropathy or GAN. The disease damages nerve pathways that carry signals from the brain to the muscles. Over time, it slowly causes its victims to lose control of their bodily functions. There are 28 known cases of the disease in the world.

Over the past year, the community has helped raise more than \$120,000 toward a \$450,000 matching grant from the Doris Buffet Sunshine Lady Foundation that will be used to pay for a clinical trial into a potential treatment for the disease. Publicity from those fundraising efforts helped Bailey initially connect with the family and provide them with an application for the Montana Hope Project.

The family was offered two wishes from the foundation. Last October, a hot tub was delivered to their home for use in the warm water therapy that helps ease the boys' pain. Next week, Levi's wish of boarding a plane and seeing a different part of the world will come true.

"I'm glad this day has finally come for you guys," Bailey said with a big smile, as he stood at the head of Spencer's first-grade class. *"It's been great to read about all this community support that you've received."* Levi's teacher was wearing a large smile, too. *"It's an exciting time for all of us,"* said Krista Votaw. *"I get choked up every time I think about these boys. They bring such joy to all of us. "This is what we all want to see for them,"* she said.

Over by the door, the boys' grandmother watched the event unfold. Lynette Spencer of Nephi, Utah, sometimes has to pinch herself to believe the outpouring her family has received from the Bitterroot Valley and beyond.

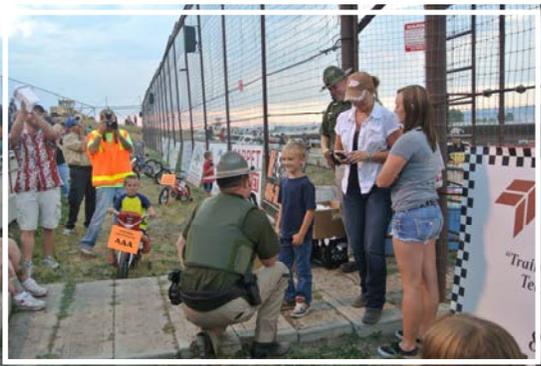
"I've been overwhelmed with it," Spencer said. *"I never would have expected that so many people would be willing to step forward to help these little boys. We are all so appreciative."*



John's Wish

On Friday, July 26. Hope Project wish recipient, John, was elated to go to the Gallatin Speedway in Belgrade for the races. Little did he know that at intermission John and his family would be coming out to the track to be presented with a surprise wish to Disney World! The smile only got bigger as John jumped in a patrol car for a couple of laps around the dirt track to the roar of the crowd. Special thanks to Best Rate Towing of Belgrade who put the wheels in motion to make this happen.

By Glen Barcus, MHP 245





After cancer derailed Josh's 18th birthday celebration and made him miss high school graduation, he became even more focused; first on getting well and then on his pickup.

The Senior High School student wanted his 1989 Chevy pickup fixed before he leaves, belatedly, to start college next fall. On Thursday evening in April, Josh was

lured to the Heights by his mother under the guise of picking her up after her car broke down. Instead, when the door opened on The Chassis Works body shop in Billings, Josh spotted two dozen friends, family members & volunteers for the Montana Hope Project standing around his restored and repainted ride.

"I think it looks great!" he said, hopping on the running board to see that the hail damage to the roof had been fixed.

Amid shouts, whistles and some "Happy Birthday" greetings, Josh grinned widely and started admiring the body work, more than 100 hours of donated labor by Chassis Works owner Jeremy Bartram. Despite the attempt at secrecy, Josh said he sensed something was going on.

"I've been dying so bad over the last two weeks to drive this," he said.

After Josh was diagnosed with Stage 4 lymphoma with signs of leukemia, he endured nine rounds of the most potent chemotherapy available, his mother said. The last dose was in December. A March checkup showed no trace of the illness that had defined the family's life for a year.

"You'd never know he went through cancer because of his positive outlook," his Mom said. *"He helped us get through things."*

Josh plans on working two summer jobs at Dairy Queen and Scheels until fall, when the bass fisherman will drive his truck to Montana State University in Bozeman and start studying biology. While the body work proceeded, Josh's Dad, Brett, spent a couple of weekends installing a 350 engine in his son's truck.

"He put some father's loving hands on that truck," said Dawn White, Billings area Hope Project coordinator.

Most Hope Project recipients want to take a family trip to Disney World or Hawaii or go on a shopping trip to buy electronics; Josh only wanted his truck.

"He said if they can't redo the truck, the gift can go to someone else," Josh's Mom Sandy said.

By Jan Falstad, Billings Gazette
Pictures by Paul Ruhter

J O S H ' S W I S H



Seth's Wish

Seth, age 6, is from Harlem, and was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2012. The Hope Project granted his wish to go to Walt Disney World with his family.

The president of the Montana Hope Project, Richard Hader, is originally from Harlem and through his hometown connections found out about Seth's health challenges. Richard personally came home to Harlem to present the wish to Seth during an assembly at Harlem Elementary School.

Seth's Mom, Valerie, said that she was grateful for the wish and to the community for all of their love and support during Seth's illness.



Pictures take by John Paul Schmidt, Havre Daily News

Joslynn's Wish

By Eddie Gregg
Billings Gazette

Joslynn, age 8, was so excited she said she was “going to explode.” Surrounded by about 20 family and friends at a Pizza Hut in the Billings Heights, she had just found out the Montana Hope Project had given her family a trip to Orlando to visit Disney World and Sea World. She looked like a happy, healthy 8-year-old. But two years ago, doctors found an inoperable tumor growing on her brain stem.

“We’re going to go ... wherever our feet takes us,” she said of her plans for Orlando. Montana Highway Patrol Troopers Toman Baukema and Justin Moran were at the restaurant as part of the surprise for Joslynn. “Can you promise to have a good time?” Baukema asked her. “Yeah, I will have a great time,” she said, hugging the trooper, “Thank you so much.” “You’re welcome, sweetie,” he said.

Joslynn’s mother, Mary, said the trip is a “huge blessing” for her family.

Trooper Moran, who was there with Montana Hope Project members Dave Evans and Dawn White, said the organization is a great way for the members of law enforcement to give back to their communities. “I hope she has a blast,” he said.

Two years ago, Joslynn started complaining of terrible headaches. One night, Mary said, Joslynn insisted that she be taken to the emergency room because she was in so much pain. A scan of Joslynn’s head showed that all the “cerebral spinal fluid was built up in her head,” Mary said. The next day, doctors did another scan and found the tumor on her brain stem. At Seattle Children’s Hospital in September of 2011, Joslynn underwent an endoscopic third ventriculostomy, a high-risk brain surgery to treat the buildup of fluid. The operation could have killed her if anything went wrong. “That was pretty scary,” Mary said. “We got there Friday and they told us they were hospitalizing her and that the surgery they were doing could be fatal.”

But Joslynn came out of the surgery “great,” aside from at least six months of severe short-term memory loss. “It was so bad I had to be there with her, like, all the time throughout the day, reminding her of what she’s doing and what she needs to be doing,” Mary said. Despite everything she’s been through, Joslynn has stayed upbeat, and she’s even developed a spiritual side, the 8-year-old’s mother explained. “I’m not really sure where she gets that from, but it just comes automatic to her,” Mary said. “She’ll ask me to pray with her, or if we can go to church. She likes to read the Bible. I think that’s what brings her through everything.”

About two months ago, Joslynn’s health problems prompted Mary to pull her out of school and start teaching her at home. “It’s been taxing because I’m a single parent,” Mary said. Her husband passed away four years ago. She continues to care for her stepson Anthony, 14, who will be going on the trip to Orlando, too. “That was a part of (Joslynn’s) wish, too, is that Anthony gets to go on the trip,” Mary said. “I’ve been through a lot,” Joslynn said with the tone of a matter of fact. “She’s always the strong one,” Mary said, laughing and choking back tears at the same time. “I am very proud of her.”



Photo by Larry Mayer (Billings Gazette)

MASON'S WISH

By Perry Backus,
Ravalli Republic

It's been almost three years since a family in Hamilton received the news that no parent should have to bear; their 4-week-old baby boy, Mason, had leukemia. Right after the diagnosis, the community came together through Cornerstone Bible Church to help meet the expenses the family would incur during a most challenging time.

For the next seven months, Mason's mom, Alicia, and the family's two young children lived in an apartment in Spokane while the baby went through chemotherapy. "It was a difficult time for all of us," Alicia remembered. "The two older kids saw what the baby went through."

At 3 years old now, Mason has been in remission for the past two years and is doing well, but Montanans didn't forget about him or the family's ordeal. One night, Moose Creek Restaurant closed its doors to host a party thrown by the Montana Hope Project. The family was selected by the Association of Montana Troopers-sponsored program for a weeklong, expense-paid trip to Disney World.

Mason and his family received the 364th wish granted by the Montana Hope Project, a program that focuses solely on children facing life-threatening or life-altering illnesses. Tiana Hader, the organization's wish coordinator, has been helping with the program for close to 20 years.

"It's an amazing thing when you can give kids a chance to step away from their world for a little bit," she said.

The trips to Disney World include an expense-paid stay at a nearby facility that caters to kids with special needs. The Hope Project also includes some spending money, car rental and a digital camera to capture all the memories.

"It's a deeply humbling experience for the families," she said.

“Most of them are on a tight budget and would never be able to afford anything like it.”

Once children are granted a wish by the Montana Hope Project, they become part of that organization’s family that gathers twice a year for reunions at Glacier and Fairmont Hot Springs.

“It’s really nice when everyone gathers together,” Hader said. “The kids all have such a good time.”

The best part of being the wish coordinator is hearing all the stories from families about the memories that will last a lifetime. “It’s really, really good for your heart when you hear those,” she said.

Alicia has been very impressed with everything she’s learned about the Montana Hope Project. “I just think it’s a huge blessing for our family and all the others,” she said. “There are many children whose young lives are impacted by life-threatening disease. It’s a wonderful thing that Montanans come together as a state to love on these children.”



Photo by Perry Backus, Ravalli Republic

ELSA'S WISH

By Candace Chase,
The Daily Inter Lake

Elsa, age 5, and her four brothers and sister were excited just to see Montana Highway Patrol cars when they pulled into Pizza Hut for lunch on Wednesday with their parents, Elden and Sarah of Kalispell. Once inside, the troopers invited them all to lunch and made Elsa's dream come true — a dream to go to SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida.

"She wanted to ride in an airplane and go see a big fish," Sarah said.

Early Saturday morning, the family takes off from Missoula to fly to Orlando where they will stay at Give Kids the World Village, a resort designed to serve ill children and their families as they visit surrounding parks such as Sea World. They will return home to Kalispell the following Saturday.

Elsa was born with Prader-Willi Syndrome. "She's missing a piece of chromosome 15," Sarah said. "It makes her have an insatiable appetite. It's lifelong."

Compounding the agony of unending hunger, victims of Prader-Willi have no metabolism and no muscle tone to burn the calories they crave. Sarah said the syndrome drives Elsa to take food anywhere and everywhere that she can. She said that they have taught Elsa about her disorder but she still can't resist food left within her grasp.

"It's just a constant, constant, constant battle," she said. "If not watched, they can get so obese that that creates all the other problems. If she gets a hold of tons of food and starts eating, she has slow stomach emptying and her stomach could just burst and kill her."

Because of her low muscle tone, Elsa didn't walk until she was 3. She also had scoliosis (curved spine) that required her to wear a cast or a brace on her back for the last two years.

"She just hit a milestone," Sarah said. "She just graduated to only having to wear the brace at night."

Sarah said that she learned



Trooper Bob Hensley with Elsa.
Picture by Patrick Cote,
Daily Inter Lake

"To ride in an airplane and see a big fish."

about the Montana Hope Project from one of Elsa's physical therapists. At the time, her daughter wasn't yet talking, so she decided to wait to apply. She and Elden decided this spring was a good time based on the usual progression of the syndrome.

"Between the age of 5 and 7 is when behavior issues and food issues start to escalate for the rest of their life," Sarah said. "We wanted to do it now when it's not so much of her life focused on food. She's still easily distracted away from food." Now that her daughter speaks, her mother was able to ask her what she would like to do. Sarah said that Elsa had surgery on the back of her throat to make her soft palate longer, which improved her speech tremendously. She struggled with the word fish as she worked with her therapist.

"So, at the time, she was very much into fish," Sarah said. "So, she wanted to go riding on the airplane and go see a big fish. She would reach to the ceiling saying 'super big fish.'"

The children had no idea the trip was impending when Sarah and Elden made arrangements to take them to lunch on Wednesday. They thought it was just a coincidence when the Montana troopers invited them to join them for lunch. Sgt. Steve Lavin later came in with balloons and granted Elsa's wish to go to SeaWorld. The trip was left up to the family.

"The kids don't even know what Disney World is. We don't have a television," she said. "They're very excited about SeaWorld and LEGOLAND and the beach. I don't want to do too much."

The children range from 1 to almost 10. Those who are old enough attend East Evergreen Elementary School. Sarah stays at home with the children while Elden works at Plum Creek MDF in Columbia Falls. The family hopes to make happy memories for Elsa to recall as she lives with the challenges of Prader-Willi Syndrome.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime deal," Sarah said.



MIKENNA'S WISH

By John Grant Emeigh,
The Montana Standard

A Butte family is on its way to Disney World to fulfill a wish for a girl fighting cancer.

Mikenna, age 4, has been battling Burkitt's lymphoma, an aggressive form of cancer, for two years. Her family has been running her back and forth to Seattle for treatment, but this week she's flying to see Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

Trooper Joe Wyant of the patrol said the Montana Hope Project has been successful.

"It's our way to do something good for the community," Wyant said.

Mikenna's mother, Monica, is grateful for the Hope Project and the opportunity to give her daughter a fun vacation.

"We are just beside ourselves. She's just very excited to go," Monica said.

Mikenna's father, Todd, grandmother, Cheryl, and her older sister, Mikayla, 7, are all going on the trip.

The Hope Project gave Mikenna a \$500 check and a digital camera to record her memories.

Monica said her daughter's cancer has been in remission for almost a year. Mikenna has been going through regular chemotherapy treatment and tests since August of 2011 and, according to her mother, has been a real trooper through the long, difficult process.

"She is a very strong little girl; she amazes me with how well she handles this," her mother said.



SKYLER'S WISH

By James Redmond,
The Mountain Mail

A 9-week-old munchkin kitten from Poncha Springs found a new home July 1 and helped grant a wish to a critically ill teenager from Montana.

Skyler, age 18, from Plentywood, Montana, received a diagnosis of glioblastoma, or brain cancer, in March. The Montana Hope Project approached her a few weeks ago and asked if she would like to make a wish.

Her only wish was for a munchkin kitten, Richard Hader, Montana Hope Project president, said. Dawn White, Montana Hope Project area coordinator, said the project found an expected litter of munchkins, but they would not be born until fall. However, Hader's wife used to go to school with Lisa Smithey of Poncha Springs, and knew she raised munchkins at one time. Smithey said she just happened to have a munchkin kitten when the Montana Hope Project contacted her.

"It's a funny story," she said. Smithey said she had intended to fix the father cat but had not gotten around to it before her cat became pregnant again. The litter included only one munchkin.

Munchkins, now a recognized breed of cat, started as a genetic mutation, characterized by disproportionately short legs, Smithey said. When Smithey heard why the Montana Hope Project needed the munchkin kitten, she agreed to help.

Skyler arrived at Harriet Alexander Field on a jet and named the 9-week-old kitten Jett on the spot.

The trip to Salida came as a complete surprise, she said. When she left home that day, she thought she was going to the hospital. She knew the project had found a kitten, but she thought she would travel to pick it up over the weekend. Smithey met Skyler on the airfield, where she took the kitten into her arms. Skyler held onto Jett until she boarded the plane, except for a brief moment when she handed her back to Smithey so she could say goodbye.

"I promise I'll take good care of her," Skyler said. "I'm a cat lover."
Giving the kitten to Skyler gave Smithey a good feeling, she said with a smile.



THE BEARS THAT CARE

The Montana Hope Project, started in 1984, originated from the strong desire of Montana Troopers to establish a special service that would create a positive and rewarding impact both for the troopers and for the communities in which they serve.

The goal of the Montana Hope Project is to make dreams come true for critically ill children in Montana. Wishes are funded by corporate and private donations, memorials and fund-raisers, and ninety percent of all proceeds raised go directly to Montana children. The average granted wish costs about \$6000 and the most requested wish is a trip to Walt Disney World.

The Montana Hope Project's volunteer staff is comprised of active and retired troopers as well as many community volunteers. Our success is due to the combined efforts of dedicated individuals and organizations who give their generous support. We welcome you to join our efforts to give critically ill children their dream come true. The lives of children are precious and should never be cut short without wishes coming true.

If you would like to help with an event or organize your own, please contact the coordinator in your area to get involved. Find coordinator contact information at www.montanahope.org.

HOPE PROJECT PLATES



Child of Hope, Joslynn.



Five Montana Hope Project plates all in a row!

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FOLLOW US ON THE WEB

Please go to www.montanahope.org for more information and contact information for all the coordinators. Please submit website & newsletter stories, letters, photos, ideas, information and updates to the editor:

Kathy Sangray
1975 US Hwy 287 N
Cameron, MT 59720
ksangray@montanahope.org

GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE

Help make a wish come true for a critically ill Montana child. Make a donation to the Montana Hope Project in the name of a family member, friend or recipient. A donation to the Montana Hope Project directly benefits Montana children.

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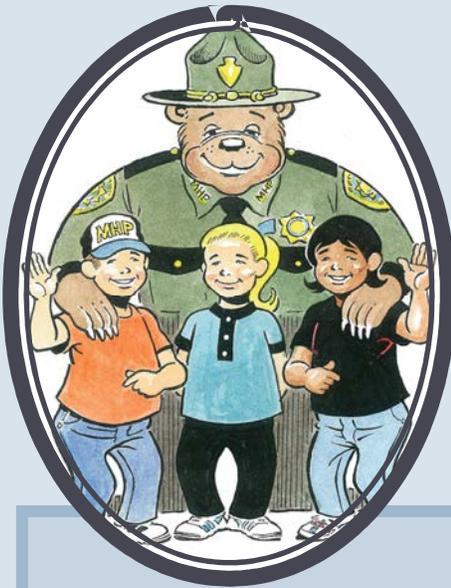
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THE BEARS THAT CARE

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Merry Christmas!

Hope Project families and volunteers gathered at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort for the annual Christmas Reunion the first weekend in December. Gifts and goodies welcomed the families to their rooms. Santa and Mrs. Claus even showed up with treats and to pose for pictures and to hear Christmas wish lists.

The annual reunion is a welcome retreat from the realities of everyday life, and the day soaking in the hot springs and enjoying the fellowship of friends brings smiles to many faces.

The generous support from so many across the state allows us to host this wonderful mini-vacation each winter, along with our summer reunion at Essex each June. We thank each and every person who offers their support to the Hope Project throughout the year and we offer best wishes for a joyful and healthy New Year.