

ON A NEW YORK CITY MISSION

By: Katie Thompson

On Sunday, November 3, 2024, Bailee Parker-Godfrey hit the pavement again this time in New York City for the TCS NYC Marathon. This was her first time running the NYC Marathon and she claims that she hopes it's not her last. She was signed up almost a full year prior to the actual race and spent the year training in anticipation. She is already signed up for two more marathons in 2025. She will be running the Missoula Marathon in June and the Chicago Marathon in October. Her goal is run all 7 World Major Marathons: Boston, NYC, Chicago, Berlin, Tokyo, London and Sydney. She will have completed all 3 of the United States Majors by next October when she completes Chicago. She is also training to qualify for the Olympic Marathon Trials.



The NYC Marathon was her fourth marathon and claims that a memorable experience of the race was seeing her family at miles 12, 16 and 24 of the race. "It made me so happy to see them and it gave me an extra little boost." Bailee also responded with "I think one thing that makes me a successful runner is my stubbornness. I know it probably annoys my family, but being stubborn has really helped me in training and races, especially late in a race when it starts to get really hard. I also just really enjoy the process of getting ready for a race. I find so much satisfaction in not only achieving goals like race times, but

also from the act of running itself. I'll admit waking up at 4:30 am to get in a long run before work isn't always the easiest, but I really do appreciate the journey as much as the destination."

After finishing her race, Bailee finds it very important to walk around for the rest of the day as much as possible and eating lots of good food to properly recover from her race. Bailee finished the race with a time of 2 hours and 49 minutes. She was 989 out of 55,533 and the 79th female to cross the finish line. Something to be proud of for sure!



ADOPT- A-STAR

By: Katie Thompson

A Christmas tradition in West Yellowstone, is the Adopt-A-Star program that we all have become familiar with. When asked, the United Women have records of this program going back 30+ years but don't know the actual year it was started. I know when I moved here everyone has their own opinion on how long you live here before you become a local, but 30+ years surely qualifies as a local tradition.

Stars are now available for pickup at Madison Valley Bank, First Security Bank and Westmart. The UNWRAPPED gifts are due to the Povah Community Center by December 13, 2024. If you do grab a star, please make sure to return the star with the gifts you brought. This helps them keep things as organized as possible.

If you'd like to contribute and either no stars are left to be picked up, or you just have a toy or two, please feel free to still drop the items off at the Povah Community Center. This helps the United Women and their team of volunteers to fill in some gaps that may be present.

Thank you to all that has already contributed by items or by monetary donations, each family will get to pick up their presents the week before Christmas and will each receive some wrapping paper and bows to wrap themselves.

If you'd like to help in other ways, please contact the United Women.



For the most up-to-date sports schedules and other important information, please check out our website at wolverine.life. You can also download our school app by searching for West Yellowstone Wolverines and looking for our Wolverine logo in your app store.

Don't forget the West Yellowstone Foundation bus is still running this winter! For only \$10, you can get a ride to Bozeman on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Contact 406-640-0244 to reserve your spot or for more information!

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WEST YELLOWSTONE FIREFIGHTERS SAFETY TIP: WINTER DRIVING EMERGENCY KIT

By: Kayla Wilson

Driving in winter conditions can be challenging. Snow, ice, freezing temperatures and limited daylight can all contribute to hazardous road situations. Whether you are headed out on a long trip or driving to work, being prepared with a winter driving emergency kit can keep you safe if you encounter an unexpected problem. Here are some ideas of things to keep in your emergency car kit.

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Tire chains or traction devices
- Shovel
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Extra warm clothing
- Hand warmers
- Water and non-perishable snacks
- First aid kit
- Reflective triangles
- Tow rope or strap
- Jumper cables
- Bag of sand or cat litter

Remember to regularly check the items in your kit to ensure they are in good condition and replace expired or damaged items.

READING WITH A BUDDY NEEDS YOUR HELP

Reading With a Buddy is a program designed to help kids from 1st to 3rd grade who need a little extra guidance with their reading. It runs 100% off volunteers. This program was a big success last year and teachers noticed an improvement in children's reading skills. More volunteers are needed to help keep this program successful. Every Monday & Wednesday from 3-4 pm volunteers are needed to help read with the kids. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information contact Giselle Hansen at 406-640-2959.

YELLOWSTONE SKI FESTIVAL: A THANKSGIVING TRADITION IN WEST YELLOWSTONE, MONTANA

For over three decades, Nordic skiers from across the globe have made the journey to West Yellowstone, Montana every November to kick off the ski season at the Yellowstone Ski Festival. What started as a small fall training camp for the U.S. Nordic Ski Team has evolved into a world-renowned event featuring ski clinics, races, and on-snow demonstrations. This event brings visitors to town during a time when Yellowstone is closed, and town would historically be empty. With early-season snow and a well-groomed network of trails, West Yellowstone is the ideal destination for skiers looking to get a head start on their winter training.

The Roots of West Yellowstone's Ski Tradition

In the 1970s, the Swanson family—owners of the town's Ski Shop—sought to attract Nordic skiers to the area. Working with the U.S. Forest Service, they helped create the Rendezvous Ski Trails, utilizing old logging roads south of town. These trails were initially packed down using bed springs attached to snowmobiles. The Swansons' vision bore fruit when their son, Carl Swanson, went on to win the 1978 Junior Nationals, and the U.S. Nordic Ski Team chose West Yellowstone as the site for their November training camp.

This tradition continued into the 80's and 90's with locals like Drew Barney, Doug Edgerton, Scott Carsley and David Ritchey. They began hosting the Yellowstone Rendezvous Race first held in January and then moved to March. This race draws hundreds of skiers to town for a ski marathon (50K race) and other shorter races. For many skiers this was their first introduction to racing and it highlighted the incredible terrain of the Rendezvous Trails. Skiers and Biathletes from all over the country would flock to West in November and December to begin their season.

In 1996 Kelli Hart and Melissa Alder opened Freeheel & Wheel. This shop addressed the growing cross-country ski and bicycle markets. They became involved with the Chamber of Commerce to diversify our winter economy and pursue the goal of making West a winter recreation destination. Drew Barney, Mike Manship, Marc Sheppard, Kelli Hart, Peggy Lynn and other interested parties also started the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation. This foundation fuels several kids' programs and now helps to manage the trails and events throughout the year. One of the many goals of the foundation is to promote a healthy lifestyle within the community.

A Thriving Tradition

Organized by the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service and the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation, the Yellowstone Ski Festival supports not only the local economy but also the maintenance and expansion of the Rendezvous Ski Trails. Revenue from the event helps fund trail management, grants, and marketing efforts, ensuring that West Yellowstone remains a top Nordic skiing destination year-round.

Whether you're a competitive skier, a novice, or simply a winter sports enthusiast, the Yellowstone Ski Festival offers an unforgettable experience. Join the tradition this year and make West Yellowstone your Nordic ski destination this Thanksgiving!



DECEMBER SENIOR LUNCH

Anyone can join the senior lunch crew from 11am-12pm on Wednesdays & Fridays at the Povah Community Center for a delicious lunch prepared by Chef Scott Fulton. Salad bar available. On Fridays, fresh vegetables and fruit are available for seniors to take home. Cost: \$5.00 for seniors, \$7.00 for all others

MENU

Dec 4: Cheeseburger, casserole, and mixed vegetables
 Dec 6: Chicken stir fry and rice
 Dec 11: Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and green beans
 Dec 13: BBQ chicken, hand cut fries, and mixed vegetables
 Dec 18: Shepard pie and green beans
 Dec 20: Prime rib dinner (\$10/person, sign up only)

No lunch on December 25, 27 or January 1

UPCOMING CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Mistletoe Magic's 2024 Holiday Bazaar and Craft Show: December 6th from 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. and December 7th from 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Povah Community Center. This event is sponsored by the Three Wise Women Productions and the Town of West Yellowstone.

L's Boutique and Sweet Pea Living 3rd Annual Christmas Party: December 6th from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. There will be shopping discounts and giveaways!

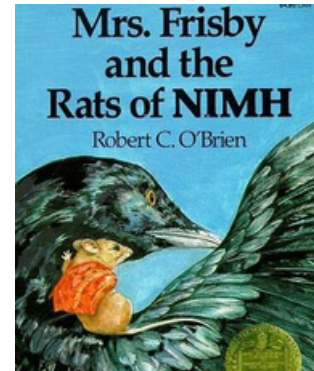
Christmas Stroll: December 20th TBD and list of activities to be announced by the Chamber of Commerce. Starting at 6:30 p.m. there will be the 2nd annual White Elephant Bingo Party at Hanks Chop Shop. Bring a wrapped gift (\$20 minimum) which is good for a packet of cards. No age limit, no limit on number of cards (one gift per packet of cards), there will be separate kids gift table. There will be one pay to play game at the end which is only for ages 18+.



DECEMBER AT THE LIBRARY

Tuesdays	3:15-4:15pm	Lego Club
Wednesdays	11:00am-12:00pm	Toddler & Pre-K Storytime
Thursdays	9:00-10:00am	Spanish Classes
Thursdays	3:00-4:00pm	Tech Hour
Fridays	3:30-6:00pm	Board Game Meetup
December 7	10:00 am-3:00pm	Photography Class (Sign up at library)
December 14	11:00 am-2:00 pm	Adult Craft Club
December 18	6:00-8:00 pm	Cookin' the Books
January 8	6:30-8:00 pm	Book Club Discussion

LIBRARY PICK OF THE MONTH



Cozy up with a classic tale about struggle and perseverance from the perspective of a little field mouse. The much-loved story of Mrs. Frisby and her children was written by Robert C. O'Brien and was inspired by research on rat and mouse populations conducted by John B. Calhoun at the National Institute of Mental Health. O'Brien takes these studies to an extreme conclusion that investigates what would happen if the rats were experimented on and given injections that increased their intelligence and lifespan. The increased intelligence of these animals led them to create their own society while utilizing the knowledge they had gained. Mrs. Frisby finds herself beseeching the rats for assistance after an adventure that would be quite small for a human but is quite the epic for a small mouse. However, much like human parents, Mrs. Frisby will stop at nothing to ensure her ill son is safe and healthy. Follow Mrs. Frisby as she learns the truth about her late husband, befriends unlikely allies, and secures her family's home not just for little Timothy's recovery, but potentially for many years to come.



If you'd like to contribute to the December 2024 newsletter, you can submit your articles to admin@thebestofwestdigest.com. Deadline to turn in articles for the December issue is December 20, 2024. The next Best of West Digest newsletter will be released on December 27, 2024.

DISCLAIMER

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WEST YELLOWSTONE HOUSING COALITION TO HOST COMMUNITY EDUCATION SESSIONS

By: Carrie Coan

The West Yellowstone Housing Coalition and the West Yellowstone Foundation are excited to invite the community to a series of informative Housing Education sessions at the West Yellowstone School. These sessions are designed to empower residents with the knowledge they need to actively participate in shaping the future of housing in our community. By attending, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the strategies being considered to address our housing needs and be equipped to advocate for the solutions that best align with your vision for West Yellowstone. Don't let decisions be made without your input—come learn, ask questions, and make your voice heard as we navigate the path to sustainable and inclusive housing development.

Event Details:

- **January 14, 2025**, at 5:30 PM dinner; 6:00–7:00 PM presentation and Q&A
 - Topic: Manufactured Housing and Mobile Homes, Housing Cooperatives
 - Speakers: Rebecca Heemstra from NeighborWorks Montana and Montana Cooperative Development Center
- **January 28, 2025**, at 5:30 PM dinner; 6:00–7:00 PM presentation and Q&A
 - Topic: Community Land Trusts and Deed Restrictions
 - Speaker: David O'Conner from Big Sky Housing Trust
- **February 11, 2025**, at 5:30 PM dinner; 6:00–7:00 PM presentation and Q&A
 - Topic: Dedicated Funding Sources for Affordable Housing, Use of Publicly Owned Land for Affordable Housing
- **Spring 2025 (Dates TBD)**
 - Topic: 80-acre land opportunity, Land Banking, Increased Residential Zoning
 - Led by: Town of West Yellowstone

Session Format:

- Location: West Yellowstone School
- Format: In-person presentations with subject matter experts, followed by an interactive Q&A. Sessions will be recorded for future viewing (links to be shared post-event).
- Audience: Community members, business owners, town officials, and anyone interested in local housing solutions.

Come enjoy a meal and engage in meaningful discussions about the future of housing in West Yellowstone. Your voice and participation are key to shaping our community's path forward.

For more information, please check your mail for the event postcard or contact Carrie Coan 406.646.1152 ed@wyfmt.org. We look forward to seeing you there!



WOLVERINE CARE FUND TO HONOR ALEX HURLEY BY PROVIDING ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION AND HOST FUNDRAISER

By: Liz Roos

A year ago, the Wolverine Care Fund was created by community members in memory of Alex Hurley. Alex was a student in our school and a member of our community. Four years ago, he lost his life to people that should have loved and cared for him. He was only 12 years old and today, would have been a member of the junior class. Those responsible for this tragedy have been held accountable and it is time for our community to heal. The Wolverine Care Fund, held by the West Yellowstone Foundation, was established to provide abuse prevention education for students, teachers and community members as well as scholarships in Alex's memory. Three scholarships were awarded to the class of 2024: Hayden Turner, Emily Jehle, and Abby Pope. Abuse prevention education is scheduled for December 3-4 at the West Yellowstone School through Erin Clements, the Youth and Family Outreach Program Director for the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office.

Abuse Prevention Series

Tuesday, Dec. 3: Mandatory Reporter Training for School Staff

Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 6:00 pm: Bystander Intervention for Parents/Community at the school

Wednesday, Dec. 4: Teen Bystander Intervention at the school (time to be determined)

On Friday, January 10, 2025, please consider attending the next fundraising event for the Wolverine Care Fund during the high school basketball games against Manhattan Christian. In addition to some highly competitive basketball, there will be a silent auction, dessert auction, 50/50 drawings, hoop shoot, and real Mexican food concessions by Vely. All proceeds will go to support the Wolverine Care Fund in Alex's memory. Last year, we raised over \$10,000 at this event. Our goal is to raise enough funds to establish an endowment of at least \$25,000, by the time Alex's class graduates, to fund these programs for the future. Monetary donations for this fund may be made to the West Yellowstone Foundation, a public charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible. If you would like to donate items for the auctions, desserts, or volunteer for the fundraising event on January 10, 2025, please contact Liz Roos at (406) 640-7688.