

THE DREAMCATCHER

News from Camp Māk-A-Dream

GOLD CREEK, MONTANA

One Last Ride Around the Pioneers: Celebrating 25 Years of Miles and Memories



Fiore riding through cows at the first RATPOD

After 25 years and 8,700 riders, people from across the nation will come together for one last ride in support of Camp Māk-A-Dream. RATPOD (Ride Around The Pioneers in One Day) has been invaluable to supporting Camp's mission to empower individuals to live with and beyond cancer through life-changing Montana experiences.

The ride and fundraiser came to life after a 2001 meeting between then Camp Executive Director, Gregg Doerfler, Events Director, Jennifer Benton, and two Missoula medical professionals—John Fiore, a physical therapist and owner at Sapphire Physical

Therapy, and Phil Gardner, MD and partner with Rocky Mountain ENT. Their dream was to host a ride in the Big Hole Valley and turn it into a benefit for a local non-profit.

The next two-and-a-half decades would witness this event grow and develop exponentially. The inaugural ride in 2002 drew 112 riders and raised around \$35,000 for Camp. RATPOD would go on to reach a peak capacity of 650 riders and raise nearly \$500,000 annually from 2012–2016 as the result of peer-to-peer fundraising.

The growth in ridership and financial support has been made possible by the RATPOD committee's guidance. Many members of this leadership committee have been involved for decades, including some who have been there from the beginning. Their work has impacted the lives of countless cancer survivors and families who have attended programs over the years, and for that, we are eternally grateful.



Gardner and Benton at RATPOD 2025

"I for one," Benton added, "will cherish the relationships that have come from this event over the years. Everyone is like family, and we hope to stay connected with each of you well beyond RATPOD."

We invite you to join us in Dillon on Saturday, June 27 for the final ride—whether as a rider, volunteer, sponsor, donor, or friend of Camp—and help us honor a quarter-century of community, connection, and generosity. To learn more about the ride, register for the event, or donate to a rider or team, visit <https://www.campdream.org/events/ratpod>.





Rolling Toward Resilience: The Journey of Camp Māk-A-Dream



The big blue bus has been a symbol of the connection and sense of belonging that defines the Camp experience. Whether it's greeting campers at the Missoula Airport, rolling along the highway on the 65 mile trek to our rural campus, or offering support at RATPOD, it stands for something special—an opportunity to become part of a community where no one fights cancer alone.

Camp's blue bus, which was originally donated through the efforts of the National Auto Body Council, has been pivotal to our campers' journey. Driven by Facilities Director Jake, the bus not only gets campers to and from Camp, but has also taken

them on unforgettable adventures, from Garnet Ghost Town to the Gates of the Mountains.

Camp Māk-A-Dream is unique—we are one of the few oncology organizations in the country that serves a national (and beyond!) population. In 2025, we welcomed campers from 40 US states and two Canadian Provinces to our campus in Gold Creek, bringing together individuals from all walks of life to experience everything Montana has to offer.

Coordinating travel plans for hundreds of participants and volunteers is no easy task, with everything from planes, buses, luggage, volunteers, and schedules needing to be planned and organized. Yet, this behind-the-scenes work ensures that every camper feels welcome, safe, and, most importantly, experiences the magic of camp from the second they step off the plane and are greeted by our Camper Manager, Jen.

This year, we're grateful to recognize The Doyle Foundation for their longstanding support of our mission. Their generosity is helping fund upgrades to the bus—including a new air conditioning system and a fresh coat of paint featuring our campers' artwork—while also supporting travel scholarships and the transportation costs that make arrival and departure days possible.

The blue bus travels many miles and is an essential part of each session, but it also reflects the larger story of Camp and how people from across the country come together and find connection in shared experience.

Help Us Name the Bus!

The blue bus needs a name! Submit your suggestion by scanning the QR code. Stay tuned as we vote on our favorites throughout the season!



2025 in Review

- + *343 Campers*
- + *6,674 Volunteer Hours*
- + *40% Campers Granted Travel Assistance*
- + *10 Camp Sessions*
- + *2000+ Financial Contributions*
- + *38 Medical Volunteers*
- + *18 Summer Staff*
- + *693 S'mores Consumed*
- + *298 Campers Conquered the Butte*





2026 Cost-free Programs

Open to cancer survivors in or out of treatment

May 7-11

Women's Cancer Retreat

Women diagnosed with any type of cancer (21+ years old)

June 17-22

Young Adult Brain Tumor Survivor Camp

Young adults diagnosed with a brain tumor (18-35 years old)

July 1-6

Teen Siblings Camp

Teen siblings and/or children of cancer survivors (13-18 years old)

July 10-15

Teen Camp

Teens diagnosed with any type of cancer (13-18 years old)

July 18-July 23

Teen Brain Tumor Survivor Camp

Teens diagnosed with a brain tumor (13-18 years old)

July 27-August 1

Kids & Young Siblings Camp

Children diagnosed with cancer & siblings or children of a family member with a diagnosis (6-12 years old)

August 5-9

Family Camp

Families with a child age 13 or under who has been diagnosed with cancer

August 12-16

Young Adult Conference

Young adults diagnosed with any type of cancer (18-35 years old)

August 27-31

Fall Caregivers Retreat

Cancer survivors and their caregiver (21+ years old)

September 10-14

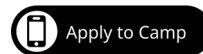
Fall Ovarian/Gynecological Cancer Retreat

Women diagnosed with ovarian cancer (21+ years old)

September 24-28

Fall Women's Cancer Retreat

Women diagnosed with any type of cancer (21+ years old)

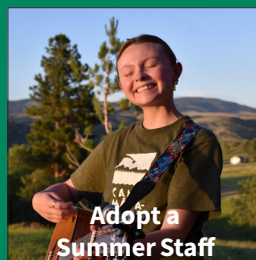


Ways to Support

Call us at 406-549-5987 to learn more!



Refer a Camper



Adopt a Summer Staff



Host a Fundraiser



Rent our Facility



Donate Now!



Volunteer with Us

Campers REMEMBERED

Campers who have passed away are remembered with care in the Granader Gardens at Camp. This list includes those from the past year and is current at the time of printing.

Maribea Berry
Redwood City, CA

Justin Lindstrom
Brick, NJ

Holly Oldag
Liberty, MO

Vonceil Bixby
Saint James City, FL

Barb Lowney
Butte, MT

Daryl Stevens
Beaver Crossing, NE

Aileah Carlson
Portland, OR

Jeremiah McCarthy
Bronx, NY

Elizabeth Stewart
Summertown, TN

Elizabeth Crouch
Edmonds, WA

Nancy MacGillivray
San Marcos, CA

Josh Wolfe
Tulsa, OK

Jimmy Goachee
Whitefish, MT

Owen McQuillan
Chalfont, PA





Children's Oncology Camp Foundation
 P.O. Box 1450
 Missoula, MT 59806-1450

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