



### Mission Statement:

Providing family-oriented Christian homes, on a working ranch for adults who have developmental disabilities.

## "HAVE I TOLD YOU, HOW MUCH I LOVED MY JOB"

*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Psalm 19:1*



*Mike Oberg*

Wow! 25 years went really fast. My family and I have been so blessed by all the people that have called Special K Ranch their home. This truly is a ministry of people for people. God has been busy in His ministry during those 25 years. The ranch grew from

160 acres to 220 acres with the purchase of the property next door. The greenhouse grew from four greenhouses to 21 greenhouses. The 60' x 100' Scott building was the first vocational building built in 2003. That same year we started the tomato program, and in 2006, the native seedling program started. In 2006 God also gave us the vision to build the eight-resident Craig house for some of our older residents. Our partnership with Montana Silversmiths began and they held a fundraiser that brought in enough donations to build the Champions Building in 2011. With the help of Sanderson Stewart Engineering, we finished the infrastructure layout and developed the Phase 2 Master Plan. We built the first house of the Phase 2 plan and dedicated Carla's House in 2019. With the completion of Carla's House, we were able to provide a home for four new female residents. We began raising funds for the new Recreation Center in 2021 and began construction in April of 2024. We received our Certificate of Occupancy from the State of Montana in September, and our Residents began basketball practice in the new gym in preparation for the upcoming Special Olympics State Basketball Tournament. Thank you, Jesus!

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31*

I can't tell you how many times I have been asked what my plans are, now that I am going to have all this time on my hands. My answer continues to be "I don't know, I have never done this before." I am looking forward to having some down time for a bit. I'm not sure what that looks like or how long it will be. I have been praying for God to use me and I am very open to whatever or wherever He directs me. I do know that I will continue to do weekend relief for the ranch. The Residents have been a major part of my life, and I have been part of their life for 25 years. We truly have become friends and colleagues in this ministry. We are in each other's souls, What a Blessing! Thank you, Jesus!

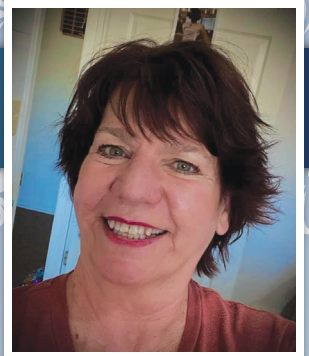
*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11*

One last time, I hope over these years I have told you How Much I Love These Guys, This Ministry, Our Supporters, and My Job!

*Thank You Lord!*

"Press On"  
Mike

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."



Kathy Lee

It is hard to believe "tis the season" is right on our heels, but here it comes. I was asked to have my article for the newsletter in by mid-November and I wondered what my subject would be.....oh wait, a new chapter is headed our way come 2025!! I am not talking about our new presidency (I am writing this on election day) I am talking about our fearless leader, Mike Oberg, who is handing the baton off to Dr. Jay Forseth. So many thoughts, quotes, and stories to choose from and where would I even start.

I started with "out with the old, in with the new", but it didn't sound right:

"Out with the old, in with the new" is an expression that refers to moving on and making changes in life. The expression is quite literal: use it to refer to changing things in your life and replacing some old things with newer ones.

Some other phrases similar to 'Out with the old in the new' include, 'Carry on a clean slate', 'Take on a new journey', and 'Reinvent yourself'.

All of these expressions only have part of the upcoming change correct; these phrases don't really do the "old" justice. You can't have new without having the old!!!

Six years ago, Mike gave me an opportunity to make this brand-new position my own when he called me after my state office was shut down. Kinda cool how God opened this door for me. Mike mentored, supported, advised, and let me learn and teach where

needed. This position was overseen by 3-4 different people doing parts of it (old). We assigned all those residential details to me while leaving Vocational with Marvin (new). With Mike's sarcastic wit and humor, his broad shoulders and awesome listening skills, he formed a well-run administrative team. ~ this will be our old.

Our new will be a fresh way of doing things. The dynamics will change for sure, but our purpose will not. Jay will bring his own brand of direction and using the "old", he will form our "new". All this boils down to change; something we are constantly doing and learning from.

So, Mike, as your "picture window" changes, remember:

"YOU'RE OFF TO GREAT PLACES!  
TODAY IS YOUR DAY!  
YOUR MOUNTAIN IS WAITING,  
SO... GET ON YOUR WAY!" ~ DR SUESS

I am super excited that Mike will continue to do relief for me; which makes me his supervisor!!!! HAHA

May your holidays be Blessed and 2025 be good to you!

Kathy Lee  
Residential Director



**NOTHING BUT NET..**

*Change: to alter, vary, modify to make or become different. Change implies making either an essential difference, to lose original identity or substitute one thing for another.*

Change is one of those words that we use to describe things in life that make it hard for our residents to adapt, to overcome, or to be able to deal with life in general. We all understand that life has lots of change, and usually we learn to deal with it. But the one thing that remains consistent in life is that “change” will happen.

I’ve often noticed that change is hard for our residents to deal with, yet it’s unavoidable for them, and as staff, we try to minimize it and help them work through it. As our northern climate seasons change from Summer to Fall to Winter, then to Spring, we have change all around us that we better take in stride, or it can overwhelm us and stop us from being successful in life.

Our retiring Executive Director, Mike, has many times referenced the term “seasons” to describe the changes that take place where something is altered, varied or becomes different. Mike is now ending one season and beginning another season that will be very different than the previous one. In the timing of his season changing and the fact that he has been involved deeply in others’ lives here at SKR, it by nature will involve “change” for everyone that lives and works here.

The Bible says something interesting about change, and it’s worth our attention as we see great change taking place at SKR. It goes like this: Malachi 3:6a “I the LORD do not change.”

Honestly I have a finite understanding of what all that might mean in the face of the many changes that we deal with, but I think I can sum it up like this: As I have witnessed changes in life, and rejoice in them as part of God’s plan, I also know that the foundation to being successful in all of life’s changes is to know and understand that my Heavenly Father does not change and provides an absolute rock-solid foundation for us to hold onto in the midst of changing seasons.

We have continued through another year here at SKR, change/seasons will happen, and we will miss Mike, his leadership, friendship, spiritual strength, stability and love. We love him, honor him and his service here at SKR and know that God will continue to bless us as we move from Winter into Spring. Dr. Jay will lead us into this new season. The Christmas season is upon us now as well, so I hope and pray for all of you that you find strength in Jesus as God’s son who took on flesh, was born to us, and gave his life so that we can have life and life everlasting. He will not change.

Marvin Schieldt  
*Program Director*



*Marvin Schieldt*

**GO RAMS GO!**



# UNSTOPPABLE



*Steven Aadland*

The residents and supporters of Special K Ranch have taught me so much since they welcomed me as development director back in 2012. Reflection on my time here at the ranch, especially upon the last few years, was sparked by a presentation I gave at the Laurel First Congregational Church this past November.

The last time I presented for this fine congregation was May of 2020, which was a much different time in all our lives. During the '20 presentation, I couldn't help but feel concerned about the future and what it would mean for this organization. Because of so many unusual circumstances, the world was pulling back financially, and the pathway forward was filled with uncertainty.

During the next few years, I learned there was no reason for concern. You, our unwavering supporters, blessed Special K with a home renovation, a newly built garage for that home, a brand-new recreation center (WOW!), frequent donations to our operating fund on which we greatly rely, and too many additional things to list. I learned that our residents, supporters, and this ministry are even more resilient than I thought possible.

Heartfelt thanks to you for helping with our work and for making Special K Ranch unstoppable! With your steadfast support, the ranch has continued to flourish, regardless of unprecedented times in our recent past.

As we welcome Jay and 2025, we wish you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Gratefully,  
Steven Aadland  
*Development Director*



Heartfelt thanks to our generous sponsors who supported the 2024 Fundraising Dinner & Fund Drive with pre-event gifts of \$1,000 or more!

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# RANCHERS OF THE MONTH

These ranchers displayed exceptional behaviors and work ethics recognized by peers and staff and deserve special recognition.



JULY  
*Ben J.*



AUGUST  
*Andrew*



SEPTEMBER  
*Ben C.*



OCTOBER  
*Kaycee*

# RANCHERS OF THE YEAR



MOST IMPROVED RANCHER  
*David*



RANCHER OF THE YEAR  
*Robin*



RANCHER OF THE YEAR  
*Justin*



*Sue White*

I've been fortunate to be with the ranch for 24 years. The first ten I was a houseparent for four great girls. I never would have imagined this would be the direction our family would go, but God knew what a blessing it would be for us. We shared so many laughs, frustrations, and celebrations with our girls and the ranch.

Then change came after my husband's cancer, and the loss of our youngest son. So, God brought me back to my tribe. They loved me through the grief and encouraged me through despair. They reminded me of joy once again. How can you not love your work when reminded that "you're prettier than a dump truck." Best compliment ever!

*Love my work, love my tribe.  
God is Good!!*

Sue White  
*Vocational Advisor*



# *Honorariums and Memorials* JULY 1, 2024, THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2024

*The people honored and memorialized on these pages are part of the ongoing ministry of Special K Ranch.*

*A special thank you to those listed for making these gifts.*

## **IN HONOR OF:**

DALLAS EIDE

Mark Mattheis

DEB HADLOCK

Emily Burns

KARI NOVASIO

Lawrence & Carol Barber

MATHEW ROWLEY

Modern Woodmen of America

## **IN MEMORY OF:**

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Emily Burns

HANK GREMMER

Jennine Budge

JUDY HADLOCK

Emily Burns

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VICKY KAY METZGER

Jim & Ruth Hatten

CONNIE MILL

Cathie Kautz

GREG MILLER

Kathleen Chaffee

Ed & Roxie Kraft

Rick & Brenda Kraft

Theresa Leone

Tom & Pam Robertus

JOHN MOHR

Kate Delavan

Dan & Vicki Kenyon

Jeanne Mohr

Richard & Judith Mohr

KATHLEEN MOHR

Ralph & Donna Mitchell

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Mike Oberg

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NICK WEIGEL

Jim & Ruth Hatten  
Mary Kasner  
Carol Sands

PHYLLIS WILLEMS

Steve & Konny Martin  
Robert & Sherrie Willems

ROBERT WILLEMS

Bill & Deborah Jones  
Steve & Konny Martin

JUDY WORDEN

Andrew & Karin Racki

GARY ZEILER

Kayrene Kraft  
Norma Walter

JEANNE ZUPAN

Roger & Nancy Beeter

*If you have made a tribute gift and have not been listed, please contact us.*

# Leaving Your Legacy A Way to Help Others

A will is the simplest form of a planned gift and it affords everyone the opportunity to help others and have a living legacy.

Consider naming Special K Ranch in your will for a percentage, a specific amount, or as the sole benefactor. The blessings you have received will continue to bless and help others.

When updating your will, check with your attorney for the proper legal forms and wording.



*This is not goodbye...  
This is until next time*



Love is the  
True Spirit of  
Christmas



## WAYS TO HELP AND SAVE ON TAXES

### MONTANA INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR ENDOWED PHILANTHROPY

**Important Update!** The Montana Legislature has increased the maximum credit to **\$15,000 (\$30,000 for couples filing jointly)** for Montana taxpayers. Planned gifts, such as charitable gift annuities, qualify for this credit, which is worth 40% of the charitable gift amount. For businesses making an outright gift to a qualifying endowment, the maximum credit has increased to \$15,000. This popular and tax-wise way to give to the SKR Foundation Endowment supports our residents permanently.

### HAVE AN IRA?

Individuals who are 70½ or older can transfer up to \$105,000 from an IRA, directly to a qualifying charity, without recognizing the assets transferred as income. This tax-wise way of giving counts toward meeting the required minimum distribution (RMD) from IRAs. Distributions must be made from the IRA custodian directly to the ranch.

### SKR FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT

The endowment is the best long-term way to support our residents. This pool of invested funds distributes five percent of its fair market value, annually, to the ranch for general operating and other expenses.

### APPRECIATED STOCK

Giving appreciated securities yields powerful tax benefits. Generally, the full fair market value can be deducted, and capital gains taxes can be avoided.

### BEQUEST

Including the ranch in your will is a great way to help our residents and leave a legacy. Consider naming Special K Ranch for a percentage, a specific amount, or as the sole benefactor of your estate. Bequests can vastly improve estate tax situations.

### HOW WILL MY GIFT BE USED?

Gifts can be designated for the Operating Fund, SKR Foundation Endowment, or special projects. If you have questions or would like to support a specific project, please contact Development Director Steven Aadland at (406) 550-2224 or [steve@specialkranch.org](mailto:steve@specialkranch.org).

