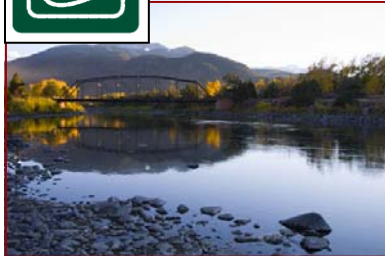




# Beyond Basecamp

The Newsletter of Montana Yellowstone Expeditions



Things are quiet here in Tom Miner Basin. As we head into fall the mornings are cool, shadows long; and the trees stained with hues of orange, red and gold.

Bear House echoes, the pungent aromas of Robert and Daniel's cooking gone; while Eagle House is somber, missing the laughing, gossiping students who lounged around on its couches during summer. With no dogs or people, the grounds - carpets of luminous green - are empty now except for the relentless spray of the irrigation system, the tree squirrels and the occasional browsing deer.

## ► From Basecamp...



Fall is a great time to live in Montana, seasonal changes add dramatic color and vitality to the landscape. Basecamp is slipping on its fall outfit, but a shroud of silence has replaced its summer vigor, reminding me the magic of MYE is not about the buildings and is only partially about Montana. It is mostly about the people who infuse it with energy, life and character, and without them it really could be any-place.

MYE is about its staff, who travel from all over the world to Montana; sharing their experience, knowledge and passion to help young people find the best in themselves.

MYE is about the young people who come from all corners of the US with the courage to leave the safety of what they know, and put themselves on the line in an unfamiliar place. They come here to learn and challenge themselves; they leave MYE knowing more about who they are, the environment that supports us, and that people who come from different backgrounds and cultures are essentially, just like them.



MYE is also about the people who support what happens here from a distance. They might be in California, New York, Montana or Florida but what they have in common is a passion and commitment to youth and education, and to making a difference in our world now, that will resonate in the future.

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Summer 2007 was a resounding success, because of what each of you brought to MYE and what you took away. Friends were made, challenges met, fears overcome, families extended, minds opened, pain conquered and our beautiful earth appreciated and nurtured.

So, remember the lessons learned and the promises made. Remember you **are** MYE; you are part of the magic. Make it count and make a positive difference in your world – where ever you are. And then you can be part of ensuring your summer in Montana will be something that happened well *beyond Basecamp*.

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*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does"*  
**Margaret Mead**

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**Ellen Sagmyr**  
**MYE Program Director**



# The Summer That Was.....

## ► The summer of 2007 saw 59 students take on the MYE challenge.

They came from several corners of the US including New York City, California, Montana and Florida. Canoeing, hiking, and drumming their way through a 25 day adventure, they made new friends, learned about themselves and their environment; and had a lot of fun.



## ► The MYE program evolves every year.

To keep getting better at what we do, we are committed to reviewing our past performance, building on our successes and incorporating new ideas into the program. 2007 was no exception with some significant program changes and additions.



A one day rock climbing experience was included in the program and run by guides from Montana Mountaineering Association with the support of MYE staff. Rock climbing, besides being a lot of fun, offers individuals opportunities for peak adventure, and accentuates the importance of teamwork. The experience left many students with the climbing bug and keen for more.....

Yellowstone National Park offers incredible wildlife viewing opportunities but without a naturalist and a scope seeing anything can be hit and miss. In 2007 Vern Smith (and his scope) accompanied many groups into the park, and a plethora of wolves, bears, pronghorn, moose and other wildlife were spied. The skills and stealth of an experienced (and passionate) naturalist maximized our student's experiences in the park. Thanks Vern....we wondered what you are doing in 2008.....

'Sustainability' - another new program element - was coordinated by Cari and enthusiastically embraced by staff and students alike. Read more about it later in this newsletter.....

## ► Service was, as always, an important program element.

The 2007 projects ranged from building and painting to running recreation programs; and organic gardening to campground maintenance. Thanks to the following organizations for their support: Habitat for Humanity, Farms for Families, LINK's, Big Brothers and Sisters, Gallatin Valley Botanicals, Sweet Pea Festival, USFS, and Bear Encounters.

## ► The new look intern program was a runaway success.



Mike, Alex and Ryan set a high benchmark, making the most of the opportunities to develop their own skills and knowledge, and adding value to the MYE community. More about that in a later newsletter.....



## The Summer That Was.....

- ▶ **Several building projects were completed over spring adding both comfort and challenge to summer life at Basecamp.**

The addition of a roof over the deck between Bear and Eagle House created a great outdoor dining room which we used for the majority of our meals.

The new designer bathrooms and laundries doubled capacity, reducing the wait time for showers and laundry. They also made the ablution experience a lot more pleasurable (which sometimes offset the gains from increased capacity!).



Five new low ropes course challenge elements dotted around the site saw plenty of traffic. Groups enthusiastically took on the challenges of 'The Wall', 'The Wild Woosey', 'The Giants Finger', 'Trust Fall', and 'Ants on a Log'. Sound kind of weird? I guess you had to be there.....

There was a significant turnover of staff from 2006 resulting in the majority of 2007 staff members being new to MYE. An eclectic bunch - from professional photographers to environmental interpreters to kinesiologists; they coalesced to create a dynamic group of people with a variety of skills, experience and knowledge. Two things they had in common was a passion for the outdoors and a drive to share this with our students and each other.

- ▶ **So the combination of new activities, tried and true program elements, flash new facilities, and new and returning staff, resulted in a summer program that met the goals and reinforced the values espoused by MYE. Another great summer and 59 new alumni – thanks to everyone who made it happen.....**

## MYE Video

- ▶ **The MYE DVD is nearly done!**



This summer, some of you had the chance to help MYE make a DVD. Maybe you were interviewed for your insights, or your group was filmed hiking through a meadow, moving cows on horseback, or paddling the Yellowstone.

MYE will use this DVD at schools and organizations to help recruit new students and supporters to the MYE family. The DVD project is being coordinated by MYE California Coordinator Lauran Eastman's brother Phil Eastman.



We will post a short version of the DVD on our website in October; and the full version will be available on DVD. We'll pass them out at MYE events this Fall and Winter, and we hope you will share them with friends and family.

▶ **You are still our best way of keeping the MYE spirit alive. Please help us spread the word!**

**Andy Leider**  
**MYE Executive Director**



## School of Embodied Leadership

▶ By Andi Rodriguez MYE 4 & 10



When I think of the word leadership, I think physical endurance, power, and taking charge. During my time in Petaluma, at the SOEL camp, I realized that there is more than one way to be a leader. It not only involves the skill to communicate and understand others, but it also requires an understanding of yourself. This was one of the many exercises taught at the camp.

Our daily routine consisted of a 10 minutes breathing exercise, 30 minutes of running, then 30 minutes of crunches and core workouts. Throughout the rest of the day, we would eat, workout, do Jodo (a form of aikido), and learn to center ourselves. The centering of our bodies is a hard concept to grasp, but once fully understand it not only helps in your posture but it helps in your presence as well.

So not only did I get a good workout for a full week, but I also learned more about myself, my weaknesses, and my strengths. And with all these new skills, I am more confident in myself and my words.

*Andi received an MYE Foundation Program Scholarship to attend this event*

### ▶ News Flash!!

California and Montana Alumni please 'pencil in' the weekend of 20-21 October for an MYE retreat. We don't have the details yet, but will email you and then post them in the next newsletter. Three things guaranteed - it will be fun; you will catch up with new and old friends; and learn something interesting. We'll let you know and see you there.....

## ▶ MYE Is All About...



Looking at the World from a different perspective.

Reflecting on your experiences.....



.....and learning from them.

Being part of something bigger than yourself.





# Launching MYEarth

## ► When was the last time you ate a radish? Have you had one lately—ever tried one at all?



You are probably asking yourself why, in an article titled “Launching MYEarth”, is this person asking me about a radish. It is an excellent question and we’ll get back to it .

First, a quick review of what the new program, MYEarth, is all about. MYE believes that in building strong students leaders and citizens of this planet that they must have an understanding of one of humanities greatest challenges: sustainability.

This summer we discussed at MYE that sustainability means “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (World Commission on the Environment, 1987).

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*“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions”*  
- Oliver Wendell Holmes

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The launch of this program is actually taking one of the core beliefs of MYE and bringing it to the front of everyone’s minds from students, to staff, to the other organizations that MYE works with and saying this is what we stand for.

The MYEarth program has two parallel tracks or trails. The first track is a student curriculum that all students groups will be involved in and it discusses issues, such as, global warming, climate change, pollution, water conservation, what your footprint is on the world, etc.. The curriculum is meant to give students a broad understanding of these pressing issues and create a way of seeing these issues in a new light. For example, thinking about how important water is to our daily lives and ways we can save water becomes easier to understand when you have to pump your own water everyday while in the back country, right?



The second track of MYEarth is the “greening” of the MYE organization and base camp. As an organization we are asking the same questions of ourselves that we are asking of you, how can we use less water? Where does our food come from and if we can’t get it locally should we buy it at all?



MYE believes that if we are going to be asking tough questions of you we should at least be asking ourselves the same questions, and in many respects to show you the way. I’m sure you’ve all heard the saying “walking our talk” and that is what the “greening” trail of MYEarth is all about.

The MYEarth program strives to get to the root causes and then brainstorm, dream, and create **solutions** of how to live on our planet in a sustainable way.

## ► So back to the radish.

If you’ve never eaten one before it is a small, round, reddish, slightly spicy but strangely refreshing vegetable. It is rich in potassium and calcium. The word RADISH comes from the Latin word *rad* meaning to get to the root of. If the MYEarth program has sparked some interest in you, dig a little deeper, try to find the *root* of a problem or issue so you can learn how to come up with different solutions.

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*“The starting point for a better world is to believe it can happen”*  
- Norman Cousins

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This is what MYEarth will be doing and what this column in the newsletter will continue to be about: facts, ideas, and creative strategies for change for you, your friends and family.

**Cari Hanson**  
**MYE Sustainability Coordinator**



## Where Are They Now?

In every newsletter we are going to catch up with staff - past and present - see where they are and what they are doing. We want to keep the wider MYE family in touch with each other, and to be inspired by the adventures and journeys our staff undertake when they are not weaving their magic at MYE.

### ► Remember Janelle Conner, the zany Australian who worked with MYE 7/8 in 2006.....?



Since leaving MYE Janelle has continued her to pursue her passion for adventure and travel; including living in London; holidaying in Cuba and Iceland; and leading bus tours through Europe. She is now leading the first ever regular overland bus trip between London and Australia. This 15000 mile journey visits 20 different countries as it traverses Europe, Middle East, Asia, SE Asia, Indonesia and Australia.

Janelle left London on September 16<sup>th</sup> in a pink and purple psychedelic bus and will be on the road for 12 weeks –that’s four times the length of an MYE program. She is mother hen to 39 intrepid adventurers who will live and eat together; sharing cooking and cleaning duties while they visit exotic places, camp in remote locations and meet people from diverse cultures. Sound familiar?

One newspaper interviewed her on day two of the trip as she traveled through Belgium. She described what she was doing as her dream job. "I heard about it in February and begged them to let me do it." Even as Janelle walks her talk following her dreams and visiting far away places, she hasn't forgotten MYE and keeps in regular contact. Writing from London just before departure she said .....

*"I have had a really busy summer and it was awesome but I really missed being outside and hiking or paddling my way to where I want to be. There is a special tranquility you get being in the wilderness that is hard to find anywhere else. I really missed MYE this year and I'm glad every one had an awesome time".*

Still adventures, as we all know, do involve uncertainty and a level of inconvenience and discomfort. All the good stuff and the lifeblood of epic's - those experiences we may not love at the time, but after much telling and embellishment become the backbone of our experience - and our learning.

And Janelle's trip is no different. In an email to MYE on day four of the trip she said "it is an incredible adventure. ....getting into camp and setting up in the dark - dinner at 11.30 - you can imagine!! Tents for the first time in the dark - all fun and games".

In Eastern Europe, 1000's of miles from here, Janelle could be describing summer at MYE with a few variations. Close your eyes and think about your MYE course. Instead of being in Montana you are on a bus for 82 days with 41 other people; traveling through foreign countries where English is hardly spoken, eating totally unfamiliar food, sometimes traveling right through the night on the bus, with dishes and chores for 42 and no kitchen.....

If you can imagine this you are close to the experience Janelle and her team has embarked on.

And adventure is not the only reason for the trips inception or motivating factor for some of its participants. The carbon footprint of someone traveling from London to Australia on a bus is significantly less than the same trip on an airplane, and for some participants this an important aspect of the trip. It is a much more earth friendly way to go, the downside is - it does take 81 days longer.....

If you want to find out more about Janelle's itinerary go to: [www.ozbus.com](http://www.ozbus.com) or just google ozbus and visit the numerous blogs recording the adventure.

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