

Students to help Tyler Eklund by cleaning up Mt. Bachelor

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Elk Meadow Elementary students pitching in for philanthropic project to help peer, expect to raise \$3,000

The students of Elk Meadow Elementary School will head to Mount Bachelor on Wednesday, June 13, to raise money for Tyler Eklund and learn about the ecology of the area. The field trip is a project for the school's Sparrow Club and is sponsored by Mount Bachelor. About 575 students plus teachers, parents and Mount Bachelor staff will spend the morning participating in the spring clean-up of the National Forest Land surrounding the ski resort and Dutchman Flat. The students will learn how litter and other "non-native" items, such as lost gloves and equipment, impact the environment. "In the past, our Sparrow Club activities have been on a smaller scale with fewer students," said Tom Achterman, principal of Elk Meadow Elementary School. "We wanted to find a way for all of our students to participate in a project as a school, and in turn be connected to the community." The Sparrow Club Organization pairs schools with businesses to sponsor a child with medical needs. The school participates in a community service project, and the business donates funds that go toward the "sparrow's" medical expenses. Tyler Eklund, who attended Elk Meadow Elementary and High Desert Middle, was paralyzed earlier this year in a snowboarding accident. "This is a great way for our students to end the school year," said Achterman. "It helps Tyler and students get to see how far-reaching the impact of volunteering and community involvement is. There is a genuine sense of pride and ownership that comes with projects like this one." Students will leave the school just after 9 a.m., spend an hour cleaning up the mountain and attending a presentation by the Forest Service, have lunch (provided by Mount Bachelor) and return to the school just after 1 p.m. Students expect to raise more than \$3,000 for Tyler during this one-day event.

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