

The place to gather for breakfast is the Lakeside Lobby in the Warren Miller Lodge, where the recently installed *Cold Air* & *Deep Powder* holds pride of place above the bar.



The Artist's Touch

OVER THE IMPORTED back bar of Yellowstone Club's Warren Miller Lodge hangs *Cold Air* & *Deep Powder*, a life-size mural of a family of bison in all stages of life—bulls, cows, calves, and young adults—bursting through the snow. Even from 100 feet away, the painting, measuring 8 feet by 16 feet, makes a dramatic statement.

“The wall fronting the entrance is like a mountain in front of you,” says wildlife painter John Banovich (left), who conceived and created the epic work especially for the cavernous space. “Normally when viewing a painting, you are seeing it at or near eye

PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY NGAN, STUDIO 3 INC.



level, and there is no angle on it. But here, with the animals running down a hill, the view represents the way you would experience it in nature. The bison are charging down, about to jump off the canvas and over the bar.

The lodge's architectural elements—its stone and prominent wood beams, as well as its color palette—played heavily into the bison theme. But for Banovich, the choice to feature this iconic animal had an even deeper significance.

"Montana is one of the most beautiful, wildest places in the West, where bison still roam free," says Banovich, a native son of the state. "From the beginning, I knew the subject of the mural would be bison. It also resonates with the Yellowstone Club's mission to be a place where families gather." — J.T.T.

"We knew the Yellowstone Club would be a great asset," says Mike Meldman, Discovery's founder and CEO. "The skiing infrastructure was not duplicable, and the existing membership base was extremely strong. But the club was the product of a visionary, not an operator." Despite the property's 2,200 acres of groomed "Private Powder" that seem to go on forever, the championship 18-hole Tom Weiskopf golf course, and the peerless 100-mile views across the Rockies, amenities and services originally promised to the owners and members since the club's inception in 1999 had not been realized.

Discovery's goal then was not only to fulfill the original vision but also to kick it up a notch and take the already exclusive club to the next level. In short, it was time to make Yellowstone Club a lot more fun. To that end, with more than \$100 million dollars in working capital and a focus on family and service, Discovery, with the support of its capital partners, immediately implemented numerous upgrades.

First, the company launched its signature Outdoor Pursuits program to ensure that, in addition to great golf and skiing, members had access to all that the Montana wilderness—including the storied Gallatin River—had to offer; fly-fishing, white-water rafting, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Among the winter amenities introduced were "sugar shacks" along the mountain ridge, where members ski in, get warm, grab some hot soup or a sandwich, and ski right back out.

Next, the property's heart and soul, the 100,000-plus-square-foot stone-and-timber Warren Miller Lodge at the base of Pioneer Mountain, received an extensive overhaul. The lodge was homey and comfortable but was in need of major renovations to meet the demands of the club's active, multigenerational members.

"We wanted a casual, more useable feel to the place," Meldman recalls. "We removed some of the heavier décor and made it feel more like a traditional mountain lodge with an inviting bar." Also transformed were the amenities within—from the dining experience to the spa and fitness center. The final touch was 20 Below, a dynamic kids-only club containing arcade games, a climbing wall, a basketball court, a movie theater, and its own restaurant. To please even younger members, Discovery



A family skis home to their doorstep at American Spirit, Yellowstone Club's mid-mountain, ski-in, ski-out neighborhood.

also added 8 Below, a spin-off club for the smallest kids.

There's still more to come. Plans are currently underway to expand the area around Warren Miller Lodge to include a European-style village offering shopping, restaurants, another spa, and a "hot tub farm" with a community hot tub and a series of swimming pools.

THE RISE OF AMERICAN SPIRIT

One of the more interesting success stories of Yellowstone Club's resurgence is the new American Spirit neighborhood. Fronting iconic 11,156-foot-high Lone Mountain, the community is midway up Pioneer Mountain and boasts some of the country's best ski-in, ski-out property, an idea often left to loose interpretation. But not here.

"In most ski areas, the residential component typically borders property leased from the U.S. Forest Service," says John Thompson of Yellowstone Club's sales and marketing team. "But because we are on private land, we have the ability to put the neighborhood in the middle of prime skiing, where you can literally walk outside your house, click into your skis, and ski down to the lifts." At an elevation of 8,500 feet and flanked by some of the world's best-groomed ski terrain—which receives an average of 400 inches of snowfall each year—American Spirit's main draw is without question its unrivaled location, breathtaking vistas, and the true ski-in, ski-out feature of all the homes.

The development of American Spirit began in 2011 with two model homes and 35 home sites for sale. Since that time, all of that first phase has sold, and Phase Two