



Jeffrey Martin Cunningham

September 23, 1971 - February 13, 2026

Jeffrey Martin Cunningham, 54, passed peacefully at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, Oregon, on Friday, February 13, 2026, following a tragic skiing accident at Mt. Bachelor. He was doing what he loved most, meeting his final moments with the same courage that defined his entire life.

Born in 1971 in Traverse City, Michigan, to Lynn Kluberg Cunningham and the late William John Cunningham, Jeff was on skis by the age of 2½. He later moved to Asheville, North Carolina, where he was a member of the ski team at T.C. Roberson High School, graduating in 1991.

Jeff began his collegiate journey at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City before transferring to the University of Montana. In Missoula, his love for wild places truly took root. He earned his degree in Business and launched Quartz Creek Kayak Company, a venture that perfectly merged his entrepreneurial spirit with his passion for the water.

Jeff's professional path was a tour of the great American outdoors. He worked for The North Face in Carbondale, Colorado, and later spent seven years in Burlington, Vermont, as Head of Marketing for Mammut. A move to Knoxville, Tennessee, to work with MasterCraft Boats reignited his love for boating—a passion he carried with him everywhere he lived. After a tenure at K2 in Seattle, Jeff moved to Bend in 2013, where he served as General Manager of

Aquaglide for more than 12 years. He led with a vision that prioritized both excellence and the quality of life of his team, who did not just work for him; they believed in him.

Jeff was a legendary climber, famously summiting El Capitan in Yosemite seven times. He was also a tireless advocate for Oregon's waterways. Appointed by the Governor to the Oregon State Marine Board, Jeff worked to ensure that state waters remained safe and accessible for everyone. In recent years, he returned to mountain biking with daily intensity, riding local trails until the light faded.

Jeff was endlessly curious about the world and found joy in international travel, always seeking to immerse himself in local cultures and experiences. At home, he could just as easily be found woodworking, fixing, or tinkering with a project that inevitably ended up better than it started. He never met a dog he did not immediately bond with; dogs seemed to recognize something steady and kind in him, and the feeling was mutual.

Jeff did not wear suits. He preferred boots, trail dust, lake spray, sawdust, and chalk on his hands. He measured life not in titles, but in summits reached, friendships forged, teams built, and sunsets shared.

Jeff and his mother, Lynn, shared an extraordinary and unique bond. They were constant companions in adventure, from camping at Elk Lake to recently celebrating Lynn's 80th birthday at Lake Billy Chinook.

This deep sense of loyalty extended to everyone Jeff held dear; he had a rare gift for building community across a wide array of interests and geographies, turning friends into family wherever he went. Whether in a climbing gym, a boardroom, or on a boat dock, Jeff brought people together and made them feel they belonged. He was known for his quiet, stunning generosity, often

showing up for friends of friends in their darkest hours without being asked.

Jeff is survived by his beloved mother, Lynn; his brother, Matthew Reidemar Cunningham and sister-in-law, Helena; his nephews, Wade and Wyatt; his best friend, Josh Lagalo; his “sister from another mother,” Shannon Minkel; and his wife, Heidie Henriksen. He was preceded in death by his father, William John Cunningham.

A celebration of Jeff’s life will be held on March 15, 2026, at the Hanai Foundation (62430 Eagle Rd, Bend, OR 97701) from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM PT. In lieu of flowers, friends are encouraged to spend a day outside, take a friend boating, hug a dog, or stand at the base of something that feels just a little too big and climb it anyway.

Donations in Jeff’s memory may also be made to Street Dog Hero in Bend, Oregon.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR **15**. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (PT)

Hanai Foundation
62430 Eagle Rd
Bend, OR 97701