



Eric James Gagel, 44, of Belgrade died of a heart attack on Wednesday, January 28. Eric was born in Kentucky on November 22, 1964 to James and Dorothy Gagel.

After graduating from University of Louisville in 1987, Eric traveled across the country. During that time he lived in Phoenix, Jackson Hole and Big Sky, where he met his future wife Jenny Unze. He and Jenny married in September of 1999 and settled in Belgrade where he headquartered his painting business.

Eric Gagel celebrated life. His most favorite thing to do was go hiking or walking with Jenny and their dogs, Loki and Ole. Eric was an avid sea kayaker, rock climber and eventually he came back to fishing for enjoyment. It was something he had done as a child with his grandmother and realized how much he enjoyed it.

When he wasn't spending time with Jenny watching Dexter, fly fishing, golfing or enjoying salt-rimmed beers at The Mint, he could be found at the Bozeman hockey rink playing BAHA "puck lunch" as the goalie or hanging out at the Belgrade Albertsons gathering that evenings provisions for dinner where he always chatted with the folks and asked about their day. We all hoped he was gathering supplies to make his famous salsa.

He loved his family and friends, always giving more than they ever asked for or expected. Eric was a volunteer for the Big Sky Fire Department for 6 years and recently helped out at the Heart of the Valley spending time walking a few 4-legged friends.

As a Kentucky native, he never forgot his roots and was so excited that the Louisville Cardinals basketball team is ranked 7th this week.

The highlight of Eric's life was learning that he would be a father. He loved making sure that Jenny had everything she needed and that their little girl was healthy and comfortable during the pregnancy. He was so looking forward to welcoming his and Jenny's first child into the world this May. He was a proud "pre Poppa".

Eric is survived by his wife of almost 10-years, Jenny Unze Gagel of Belgrade, his sister Kathy Gagel and his brother Scott Gagel, both of Florida. Eric is preceded in death by his father and his mother.

A memorial will be held on Saturday, January 31st at Dokken Nelson Funeral Home on 113 S Willson Ave, Bozeman at 3:00 pm. A gathering will take place immediately following.

In lieu of flowers, a fund has been set up in Eric's name at Valley Bank of Belgrade, PO Box 106, Belgrade, MT 59714.

"Then as it was, then again it will be. Though the course may change sometimes, rivers always reach the sea." - Led Zeppelin, 10 Years Gone.