

“THE RON BALL MEMORIAL AWARD”

THE WYOMING WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION’S HIGHEST HONOR



By Kevin Hurley, LM #20
Vice President of Conservation
and Operations
Wild Sheep Foundation
Bozeman, MT

Each year since 2003, the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation has presented what is known as the “Ron Ball Memorial Award”, in recognition of one of the Chapter’s original five founders.

Ron Ball was a rancher and outfitter from the Big Piney area who served as either President or Vice-President of Wyoming FNAWS (at that time) for 11 of our first 14 years of existence. Ron was a big man, whose presence and contributions were also huge. Ron and his family were dedicated volunteers who organized many early Chapter events, meetings, and live/silent auctions. Wording on the Ron Ball Award speaks highly of the type of individual Ron was, and what he did for wild sheep in Wyoming. This award reads:

“Presented Annually, In Recognition of Outstanding Achievement Toward the Betterment of Wyoming’s Bighorn Sheep”

I was fortunate enough to be the first recipient of this special recognition in 2003, and this award holds a special spot on my wall. As you can see, over the past 17 years, a virtual “Who’s Who” of dedicated individuals have been recognized by the Wyoming Chapter for their contributions to Wyoming’s bighorn sheep.

- 2003 Kevin Hurley
- 2004 Jim Collins
- 2005 Gov. Dave Freudenthal
- 2006 Melanie Woolever
- 2007 Steve Kilpatrick
- 2008 Terry Cleveland
- 2009 Gary Butler
- 2010 Fritz Meyer
- 2011 Cole Benton
- 2012 Dennis Claman
- 2013 Bob Sundeen
- 2014 Tom Easterly (D)
- 2015 Doug McWhirter
- 2016 Lynn Stewart
- 2017 Freddie Goetz
- 2018 Ryan Amundson
- 2019 Joni Miller
- 2020 Dean DiJenno
- 2021 Jerry Galles
- 2022 Jack Welch
- 2023 Hank Edwards
- 2024 Mike Porter
- 2025 Kurt Eisenach
- 2026 Daniel Hinz

The Ron Ball Memorial Award is presented during the annual June banquet. Nominations may be made by the WY-WSF Board of Directors and/or past award recipients; selection of the recipient is made by the past winners. So, if WY-WSF members know of someone they would like to see nominated for this award, please notify one of the current Board of Directors, or one of the past recipients.

None of us do what we do for wild sheep to receive credit or recognition. However, there are some individuals that do so much, and help lead the way, that taking a moment to look back, helps all of us move forward!

