

ExploreTM

Life and land from the heart of the Yellowstone Region

FREE

Big Sky

Dec. 20, 2019 - Jan. 2, 2020
Volume 10 // Issue #26

Happy Holidays!

**Unveiling:
*Best of Big Sky 2019***

A Guide to Giving

Hungry Moose expands

A decade in Big Sky

Freezing fun, ice rink opens



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Dec. 20, 2019 - Jan. 2, 2020

Volume 10, Issue No. 26

Owned and published in Big Sky, Montana

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ON THE COVER:

Santa Claus was recently spotted tearing up the Madison backcountry. It looks like he's traded in his reindeer for a snow bike. PHOTO BY RYAN WEAVER

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Unveiling: Best of Big Sky 2019

You voted and the winners have been announced for the 2019 Best of Big Sky awards. From Best Business, Best Pizza, Best Artist and Community Member of the Year, learn who voters chose as Big Sky's cream of the crop.

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A Guide to Giving

Dozens of nonprofit organizations are based in Big Sky. This holiday season, learn about the great work their doing and how you can get involved.

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Hungry Moose expands

Four short months after breaking ground on an ambitious 2,000-square-foot expansion, the Hungry Moose's newly minted space is ready for the food staple's loyal patrons.

52

A decade in Big Sky

Over the past 10 years, Big Sky has changed—drastically. For all the good times and even the difficult ones, we've recorded the highlights in their own special section. Here's a look back.

31

Freezing fun, ice rink opens

The Big Sky hockey rink opened for the season on Thanksgiving Day. A full slate of activities will be featured on the ice this winter, including a curling league, hockey league and various camps and clinics.



Decorations displayed on a Christmas tree. This was one of the many sights and activities featured at the Big Sky Christmas stroll on Dec. 13 and 14. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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39 Homestead Cabin Fork
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
3 BED + 5 BATH | 2,318 +/- SQ. FT. | \$2,195,000

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Local author releases book chronicling ventures of elk protagonist

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – Tracie Pabst, a 15-year Big Sky resident and owner of Big Sky Shuttle, released her self-published novel “Elkwood” on Dec. 15. A seven-year process finally come to fruition, “Elkwood” is a fictional story that follows an English elk’s journey to Montana. There, eponymous Elkwood Elkington III meets other wildlife characters on his quest for purpose.

“Elkwood” explores themes of friendship, forgiveness and redemption, and Pabst is pleased to share the book has meaningful messages to offer to anyone willing to hear them.

“This book, I think, will change a reader’s life,” Pabst said.

The book is currently available for purchase in various shops and boutiques around Big Sky, such as The Hungry Moose Market and Deli, Willow Boutique, The Cave Spirits and Gifts, along with various on-mountain retailers at Big Sky Resort, Spanish Peaks Mountain Club, Moonlight Basin and the Yellowstone Club.

Pabst will be hosting a number of book signings, where readers will be afforded the opportunity to exchange thoughts on the novel and experience one-on-one conversations with the author.

Book signings will take place on Dec. 29, 3-5 p.m. at the Summit Hotel at Big Sky Resort, as well as on Jan. 3, 3-5 p.m. at the Moonlight Basin clubhouse. For more information on “Elkwood,” visit elkwoodsmontana.com.

Holiday events in Big Sky breakdown

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – As the new decade readily approaches, Big Sky organizations will present opportunities to indulge in the festive spirit with members of the Big Sky community and tourists alike. With this guide in hand, go forth with confidence in making the most of the town’s holiday-related event offerings.

Beginning on Dec. 20, the Arts Council of Big Sky will be presenting a free concert of holiday choral singing featuring the Aoide Chamber Singers in the Big Sky Chapel. Originally founded at Montana State University, the Aoide Chamber Singers are one of the state’s premier vocal ensembles, sure to bring their world-class talents to the cherished holiday tunes that define the season.

On Dec. 21, a double feature: kicking off the events, Santa Claus, in the flesh, will be lacing up his skates for a couple of turns on the ice rink at Town Center, thanks to a few letters sent to the North Pole by the Big Sky Community Organization and the Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association. Later, the Winter Soulstice Party held at Big Sky Resort will leave attendees jiggling and hollering to funk and soul music sure to warm up their tootsies after a day on the slopes.

Christmas Eve brings a host of events, such as multi-denominational Christmas Eve services at the Big Sky Chapel, an additional appearance of Mr. Claus at Big Sky Resort’s Huntley Dining Room, Christmas Eve services at the resort’s Yellowstone Conference Center, and, capping off the evening with some visual delight, the annual Torchlight Parade on Andesite Mountain.

On Christmas Day, a number of holiday services at the Big Sky Chapel are sure to compliment gifting and feasting quite nicely.

Starting Dec. 28, Kid’s Holiday Après, complete with Giant Jenga, bean bag toss, face painting, games, popcorn and the obligatory bouncy house, will fill the Yellowstone Conference Center Missouri Ballroom at Big Sky Resort with squeals of holiday joy. The event will continue each day through Dec. 30, with a special New Year’s Eve Kid’s Après taking place on Dec. 31.

The resort will also host a New Year’s Eve dinner and a New Year’s Eve fireworks event at The Huntley Dining Room and Mountain Village Plaza, respectively.

With that, EBS wishes everyone a happy holiday season and encourages even the most reserved in the room to enter the new decade in style, taking advantage of all the holiday hoopla descending upon Big Sky.

For additional information on locations, reservations and timing, be sure to reference the full events calendar found on pages 42-43 in Section 3.

Moonlight Community Foundation doles out \$300k in grants

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – 2019 was a banner year for the Moonlight Community Foundation, which delivered nearly \$300,000 in grants, scholarships and support to 22 area non profits, organizations and initiatives.

Utilizing a biannual grant cycle, this fall saw over \$140,000 in grants, scholarships and support, factoring into over \$800,000 in grants since the program’s inception in 2016.

Recipients of the Moonlight Community Foundation’s fall 2019 grant cycle include Big Sky Futbol Club, Arts Council of Big Sky, Big Sky Community Organization, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Big Sky Discovery Academy: Community Learning Center, Big Sky Ski Education Foundation, Gallatin River Task Force, Montana Land Reliance, Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association, Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance, Morningstar Learning Center, Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Gallatin County, Big Sky Community Housing Trust, American Rivers and Montana Wilderness School.

Friends of Big Sky Education and Camp Moonlight, while not recipients during the most recent grant cycle, have received ongoing funding since the spring cycle.

Visit moonlightcommunityfoundation.org for more information.

Vista Hall brings diverse cuisine options to Big Sky Resort

BIG SKY RESORT

BIG SKY – On Dec. 18, the doors opened to Big Sky’s new multi-station food hall, Vista Hall. Hungry skiers, riders and resort guests can easily explore a new cuisine every day of the week this season while enjoying panoramic views from the new location.

This 350-seat modern food hall is located on the upper level of the reinvented Mountain Village hub, The Exchange.

Open from breakfast through dinner, Vista Hall’s six new eateries offer choices for diners that run the gamut: fresh sushi, street tacos, stone-fired pizza, a classic deli, burger grill, and a European-style coffee and crepe shop. Vista Bar will serve craft cocktails and a selection of Montana beers with a stunning backdrop of Lone Peak.

The Exchange remodel included a dramatic expansion of the previous Lone Peak facing deck, creating a space that is now big enough for live music and dancing, among other activities.

Letter from the publisher:

Tipping Point

"If you don't do it this year you'll be one year older when you do." – Warren Miller

The "tipping point," as described in Malcolm Gladwell's 2000 eponymous book, is a moment of critical mass, the threshold, the boiling point at which things change forever. If you're reading this letter and are part of southwest Montana this holiday season, welcome to a historic "tipping point."

I've been lucky to be part of the Big Sky community for 20 years and have witnessed the investment and changes that have taken place in this special part of the world. Twenty years ago one of my mentors and friends Warren Miller enticed me to leave my comfortable Colorado setting to "come to Montana and be part of history," referring to the new construction of ski areas in Big Sky. Warren always had an eye for seeking out incredible stories and opportunities, and he saw in Big Sky a raw, untapped landscape poised to be discovered.

Fast-forward to today, and Big Sky is immersed in an exciting array of development including new hotels, lifts, base area expansions, Town Center development, hundreds of homes and record growth in Gallatin County. The "Best of Big Sky" section of this newspaper outlines examples of this exciting growth and the quality businesses leading the way. Congratulations to the winners in this incredibly competitive vote.

The billions of dollars in growth in our region provide incredible job opportunities and investment returns. The rapid development makes it critical for us to also unite in order to shape this region and community in a sustainable and responsible manner. And we have an advantage in 2019: We can learn lessons from the successes and mistakes that communities who have forged this path ahead of us have seen.

The time has come to set forth a vision for the open landscapes we must protect, the clean watersheds we must preserve for future generations, the sustainable practices we must embrace, and the community resources we need to help give depth and support to our community storyline.

The holiday season is a time to reflect, be grateful and set forth intentions for

the New Year. This edition of Explore Big Sky is meant to help serve as a tool to not only celebrate community but also to lay forth ideas on how to support the people, ideas and causes that need your support.

The Guide to Giving in this newspaper is full of amazing charities working to protect Mother Nature, build responsible community and provide resources for those in need. In an era of such excess, we at Outlaw Partners believe it's imperative to promote the causes that need your support. Please take time to review the Giving section, share it with family and friends, and give back to areas that inspire you.

I encourage you to help share a vision of Big Sky 20 years from today. Let's create a community that developed responsibly, shared a landscape with the animals and created a supportive, loving community driven by passion. Let's imagine a community that created state-of-the-art sustainability practices for energy consumption and worked to not be overrun by traffic. Let's imagine a community where resources like the Gallatin River and Yellowstone National Park are treated with iconic importance and no worker in Big Sky is left without a warm bed and meal.

In 20 years, let's be proud that we steered this tipping point in a direction that shaped a community that all of us, including Warren, would be proud of.

For those living here, we enjoy being your neighbor. For those considering a move to this area, we would welcome you to our amazing community. And for those visiting, *Welcome to Big Sky country and enjoy your stay.*

On behalf of my amazing team at Outlaw Partners (publisher of this newspaper), Happy Holidays and please shine your light in an impactful way.



-Eric Ladd, Publisher



The Outlaw Partners team gathering midway up the Uplands Trail in Big Sky, gaining perspective on the town's growth and evolution from the elevated vantage. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO

Additional resort tax percentage on horizon

Water and Sewer District approves 1 percent Resort Tax Proposal

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – Back in April, Senate Bill 241 finally reached the desk of Gov. Steve Bullock. A similar bill had been rejected in 2017 after a tough battle in the Legislature in Helena.

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Jeffrey Welborn, R-Virginia City and ultimately signed by Bullock on May 2, gave 10 communities and districts that currently rely on resort tax the ability to levy an additional 1 percent resort tax should individual communities vote to implement it within their respective boundaries.

As opposed to the standing 3 percent resort tax levied on luxuries, goods and services, which has been in effect since 1992 in Big Sky, funds from this additional percentage can only be used for infrastructural projects, and collections using the flex percentage point may only take place for the duration of a publicly approved project.

Back in November, both Virginia City and West Yellowstone's citizens voted the incremental percentage point into fruition with overwhelming favor—84 percent and 68.2 percent of voters approving the increase, respectively.

Now a pressing project, that of a critical water and sewer plant upgrade spearheaded by the Big Sky Water and Sewer District, will force Big Sky residents to come to a decision of their own.

Over the last few months, subcommittees from both the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board and BSWSD met four times to iron out details for a plan and proposal, and on Dec. 18 the BSWSD board of directors ratified their joint 1 Percent Resort Tax Proposal.

Under that proposed agreement, the new, full 1 percent resort tax will match the existing charter for 12 years. It would also fund the Water Resources and Recovery Facilities Phase 1 Expansion and Upgrade up to 60 percent of total project cost. The initial total project cost estimate, not including interest, is currently \$35 million.

With amortization over 20 years, the total cost is \$40-45 million and 60 percent would be \$24-27 million. This percentage was agreed upon by the joint committee because approximately 60 percent of the resort tax revenue is generated within the boundaries of the BSCWSD, and approximately 60 percent of the registered voters of the BSRAD reside within the boundaries of the BSWSD.

Current projected rates have resort tax collections growing at a rate of 3 percent year-over-year, meaning the \$35 million sum will be reached in around 11 years.

In return for the funding, the BSWSD will agree to commit capacity at the WRRF, after the Phase 1 Expansion is operational, for up to 500 single-family equivalent (SFE) housing units dedicated to deed-restricted affordable housing within the district or annexed parcels. SFEs represent the projected water use by a typical nuclear family, helping the BSWSD estimate when the town's development would outpace water treatment capacity.

Resort tax will also be applied to fund 100 percent of a lift station near the intersection of Highway 191 and Lone Mountain Trail and a wastewater forcemain up the Lone Mountain Trail corridor to the WRRF. An effluent pipeline will then be installed to bring treated effluent to the Canyon Area for groundwater discharge.

"This is the culmination of a long process," said BSWSD General Manager Ron Edwards. "This is the first time in a long time that we moved to release more SFEs, address affordable housing issues, looked towards annexing parcels, and began to address directly future developments in the Canyon such as Scott Altman's Quarry Big Sky project."

For other organizations seeking consideration for levying the incremental percentage point, a time limit looms.

"We've set a Dec. 23 deadline for applications," said Big Sky Resort Area District Manager Daniel Bierschwale. "That's the cutoff for someone to come to us and say 'I've got a project [and] I think it qualifies for the 1 percent.' We want to solicit the community and make sure there aren't things floating around out there that we don't know about."

As of presstime, Bierschwale said BSRAD had received two other applications.

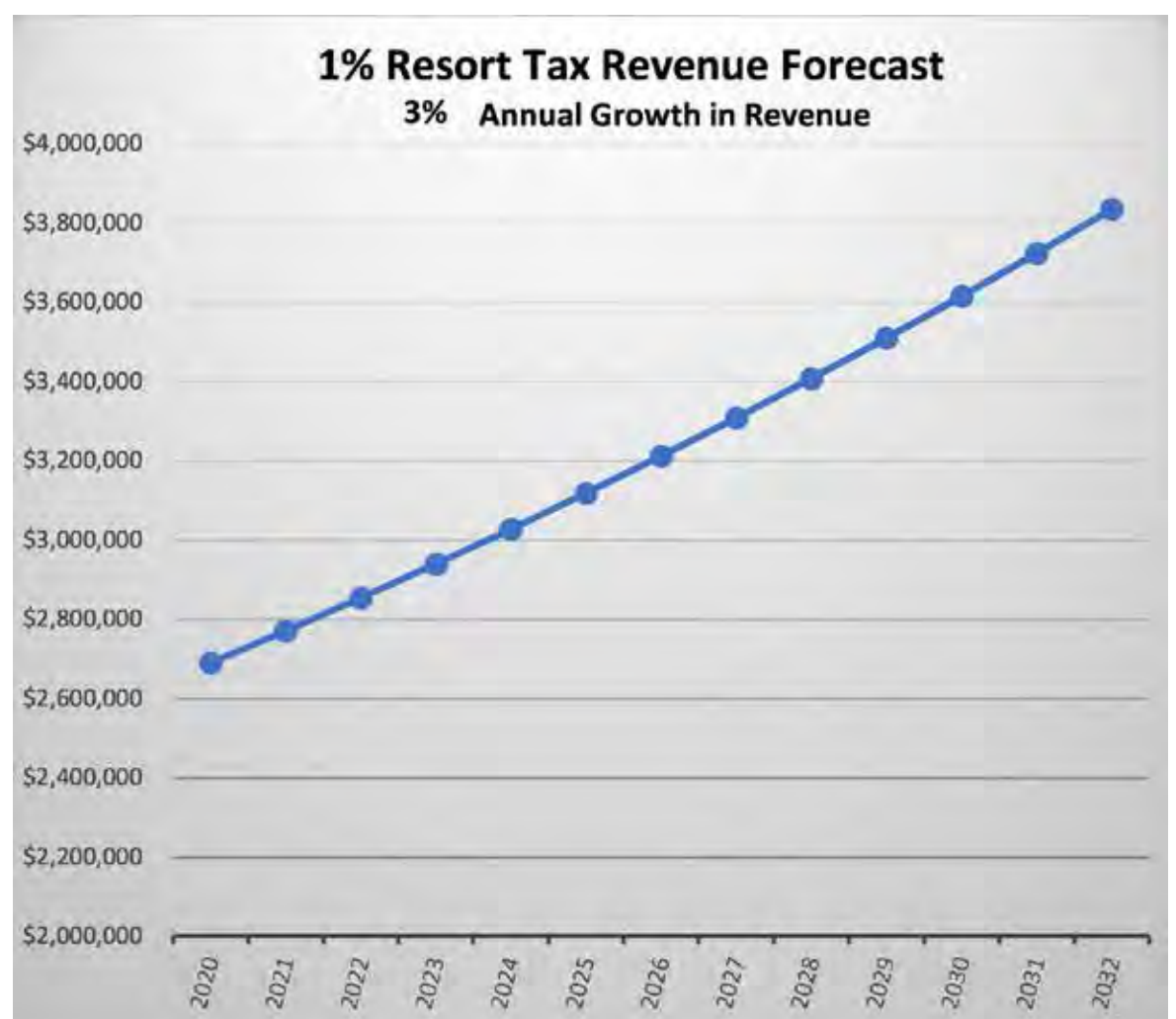
At BSRAD's Jan. 7 open meeting, board members and staff will review all applications and at that point vote on a resolution to potentially bring this increase to a community ballot on May 5, 2020.

Bierschwale thinks the community's awareness and general call for affordable housing options and other community priorities outlined in the Our Big Sky Community Visioning Strategy plan will yield favorable results during a tentative May vote, should the water and sewer upgrade resolution pass BSRAD vote before a hard Feb. 10 deadline.

"I think it bodes well for them to have a SFE component to their plan," Bierschwale said. "The community wants to see collaborative solutions to the housing problem coming forward."

Since 1992, the resort tax board's mission has been to bring funding to areas of need in Big Sky, appropriating nearly \$70 million in that 27-year span—and unlike federal and state taxes, those resort tax collections are used only for needs in Big Sky, including those gathered from the tentative increase.

"These (resort) taxes are going straight back into the community," Bierschwale said.





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**BIG SKY
BUILD**
— EST. 1997 —

Montana agencies working on permanent easement for lake park

ASSOCIATED PRESS

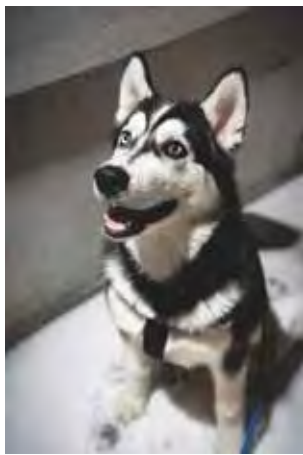
KALISPELL – Two Montana agencies are working toward a permanent recreation easement for a state park on Flathead Lake.

The “Flathead Beacon” reported Fish, Wildlife and Parks leases part of Big Arm State Park from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. The agencies have submitted a joint proposal for a permanent easement and a draft environmental analysis is available for review and open to public input through Jan. 3.

Officials say Big Arm is one of six state parks serving Flathead Lake.

Montana shelter caring for 39 huskies found roaming wild

ASSOCIATED PRESS



CC PHOTO

HAMILTON – An animal shelter is caring for 39 huskies found on a property in western Montana.

Bitter Root Humane Association operations manager Cyra Saltzman said the dogs, including two litters of puppies, were rounded up the Monday before Thanksgiving on land northeast of Hamilton.

The shelter first learned of the huskies when a spay and neuter group called to report someone had dropped off a dog that needed its leg amputated because it appeared to have been shot. A second report came from a landowner reporting three dogs running free. Eventually Saltzman and others found a property where a large number of huskies were running free.

The adults need to be spayed or neutered before they can be put up for adoption, Saltzman said, and the shelter does not have enough inside kennels for all the dogs to recover from surgery at the same time.

Montana health department to enforce flavored vaping ban

BY AMY BETH HANSON

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HELENA – Montana’s health department began enforcing its emergency ban on the sale of flavored vaping products on Dec. 18.

A temporary restraining order preventing the ban from taking effect expired on Oct. 28, the Department of Public Health and Human Services said. The judge who heard arguments on a motion by vaping shop owners seeking a preliminary injunction to block the ban has not made a ruling six weeks after hearing arguments.

The restrictions include the sale of all flavored e-cigarette products including flavored nicotine, THC and CBD e-cigarette products, both in store and online. The rules do not require businesses to destroy their inventory.

Fluid samples collected from people who suffered lung injuries, as well as samples from vaping products they had used, contained vitamin E acetate, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. The additive is used as a thickening agent, but when inhaled it may interfere with normal lung functioning.

State will remodel, add to Historical Society building

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HELENA – The state has decided to remodel the current Montana Historical Society building and add a connected building to create the new Montana Heritage Center.

Keeping the history museum across the street from the Capitol in Helena rather than move to a new site will cost less, offer more parking and make it easier for visitors to also tour the Capitol building, Department of Administration Director John Lewis said.

Ground work will begin this spring, as the building design phase continues, spokeswoman Amber Conger said.

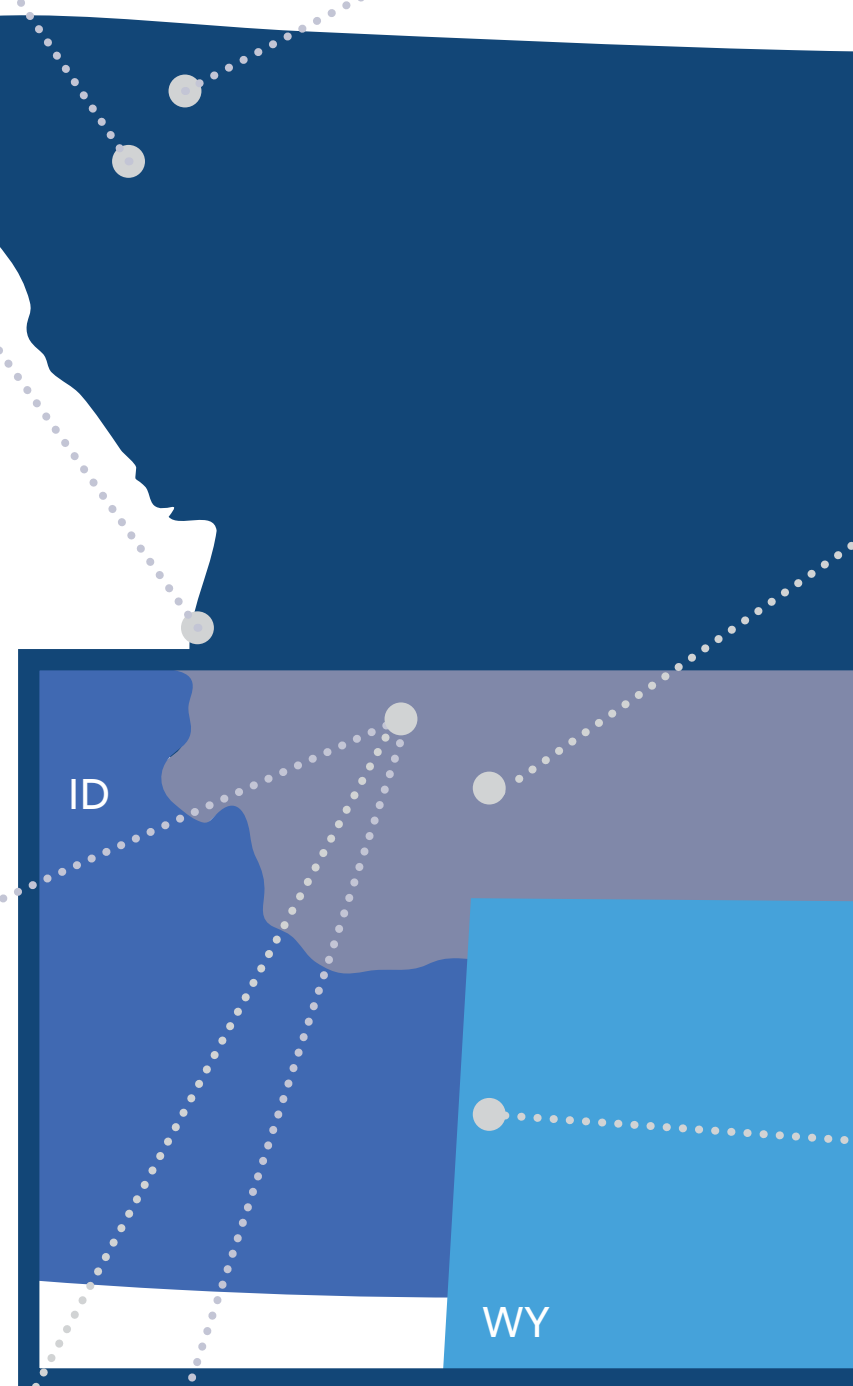
The 2019 Legislature passed an increased lodging tax to help pay for the project, which has a target budget of about \$53 million.

Glacier National Park seeks plans 2020 road construction

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

WEST GLACIER – Glacier National Park Superintendent Jeff Moore recently announced that the park’s management is pursuing options for providing shuttle service during the 2020 summer season.

Flathead County Eagle Transit has been operating the shuttle service under a cooperative agreement with the park and the State of Montana since 2007. After two months of discussions with national, regional and local park officials, Flathead County Commissioners voted on Dec. 11 to terminate their cooperative agreement to provide the service. The shuttle service typically runs in July and August, weather permitting.



NorthWestern Energy seeks more of Colstrip coal plant

BY AMY BETH HANSON

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HELENA – NorthWestern Energy said Dec. 10 it will seek regulatory approval to buy back a portion of Puget Sound Energy’s share of the Colstrip Power Plant in Montana to unload their coal-generated power.

The agreement would involve taking over the Washington state utility’s 25 percent interest a portion of the plant, and also purchasing an interest in the separate Colstrip System for as much as \$3.75 million. That would boost South Dakota-based NorthWestern’s ownership interest in the power plant to 55 percent amid questions about the plant’s future.

Customers’ bills are not expected to increase, in part because NorthWestern is not buying much higher-cost power on the open market during peak usage, officials said.

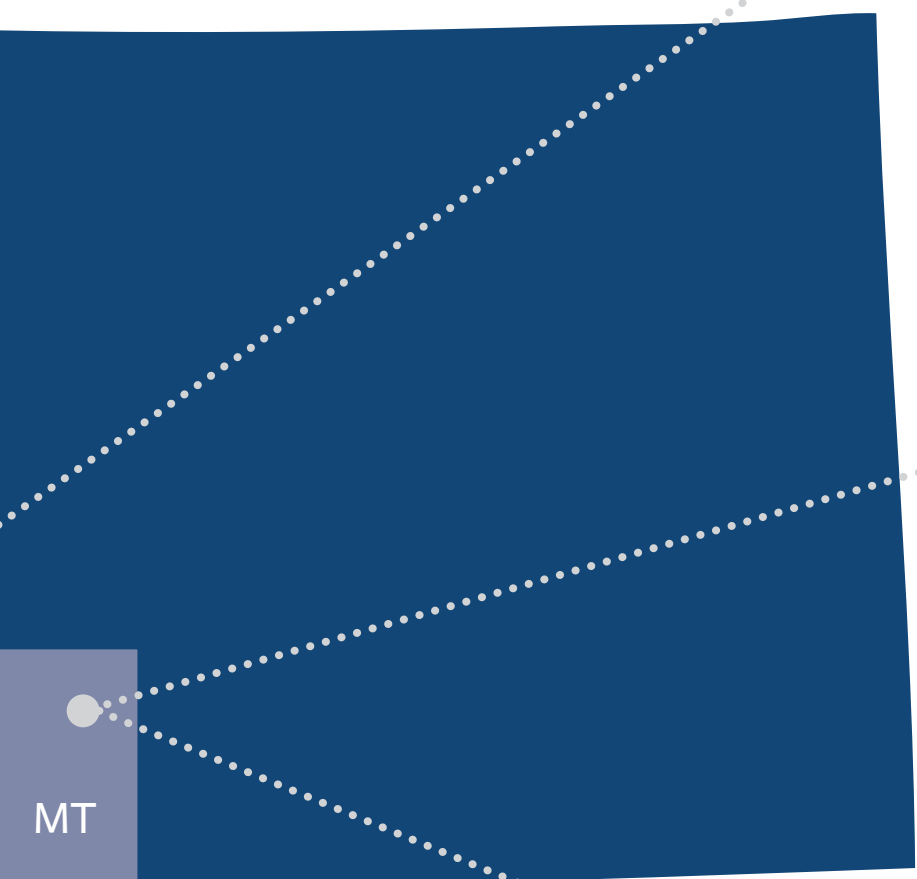
NorthWestern, will set aside about \$5 million in profit from selling power to cover costs for environmental remediation and decommissioning costs when Unit 4 is closed.

alternatives for shuttle service,

The National Park Service established the park's transit system to reduce vehicle congestion during the years-long rehabilitation of the Going-to-the-Sun Road that began in 2007. That rehabilitation is now complete. The park is currently engaged in a planning effort through its Going-to-the-Sun Road Corridor Management Plan that explores opportunities to expand its shuttle system.

Additionally, a two-year road construction project on Many Glacier Road will begin April 1, 2020. Visitors to the park in 2020 through 2021 are encouraged to plan accordingly.

Visit parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=98289 to see the complete Going-to-the-Sun Road Corridor management plan.



Montana man convicted of killing wife, injuring her roommate

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOZEMAN – A Montana man accused of killing his estranged wife and critically injuring one of her roommates was convicted Dec. 10 of multiple charges.

Jurors in Gallatin County found Joseph “Paul” DeWise guilty of deliberate homicide in the January 2018 death of Lauren Walder DeWise and guilty of attempted deliberate homicide for shooting Ashley Van Hemert. He is scheduled to be sentenced Feb. 4.

Joe DeWise, 17, testified earlier that he was with his father when he drove to Belgrade and shot the women. He also said his father ordered him to get rid of the murder weapon and he discarded it at a pond near their house, where it was located.

Natalie DeWise, 19, testified that her father confessed to killing Lauren DeWise when he woke her up to go to church the next morning. She also said her father called her from jail and asked her to convince her younger brother to confess.

Witnesses testified to physical abuse in the relationship, while defense attorney Annie DeWolf told jurors the family was happy. “There was no abuse,” she said.

Montana tribe’s quest for recognition advances in Congress

BILLINGS – Congress is on the cusp of approving legislation to recognize the state’s Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Montana’s congressional delegation said.

The proposal is included in the final language of a defense spending bill released Dec. 9 by the U.S. House.

The measure would provide the Little Shell 200 acres for a reservation and make its members eligible for health care benefits, education support and federal economic development programs.

Final votes on the measure by the House and Senate are expected soon.

Wyoming deputies lasso deer that fell through iced-over pond

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DANIEL, Wyo. – Two Wyoming sheriff’s deputies recently channeled their inner cowboy and lassoed a deer flailing in a frigid pond after it fell through thin ice.

Sublette County sheriff’s Deputies Justin Hays and Joshua Peterson responded to a report Dec. 10 that a deer had fallen into a pond near the small ranching town of Daniel in southwestern Wyoming.

Because the ice was too thin to walk on, they lassoed the deer and pulled it to shore. They left the deer on a nearby driveway where it could warm up, and it was gone a few hours later.

Montana governor seeks federal disaster relief for crops

ASSOCIATED PRESS



CC PHOTO

BILLINGS – Montana’s governor requested a disaster designation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 11 counties that reported significant weather-related crop losses, officials said.

Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock has submitted the request to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, “The Billings Gazette” reported.

Approval of the request covering 2019 weather damage would make affected producers eligible for emergency loans and other federal emergency assistance programs, officials said.

Approval or disapproval of the disaster designation by the USDA is the final step in a multi-part review process after a governor submits a request, officials said.

MT

to buy

permission to acquire part for \$1 as some utilities look

25 percent ownership rate Colstrip Transmission used NorthWestern’s own-plant’s future.

ern will not have to buy as said.

r to Puget Sound Energy is retired, officials said.

ART

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Hungry for more, Moose expansion complete

BY BRANDON WALKER

BIG SKY – The Hungry Moose Market and Deli has a rich and storied history in Big Sky. Founded over 25 years ago by Jackie and Mark Robin, the parents of a familiar contemporary Mooser face, Andrew Robin, the community staple began as a modest produce stand. Fast forward to the present and new owners Frank and Kristin Kern recently completed a renovation that adds more than 2,000 square feet to the Hungry Moose location in Big Sky Town Center.

Kern was quick to reflect on how the Hungry Moose originated from its humble beginnings. “It was an outdoor produce vegetable market, that 25 years ago, in the fall, moved in house to a little place down by Three Rivers,” he said. “And then as it grew, it took over the second part of that same store. Then 15 years ago, they moved to this store, which is right here in town center.”



An aerial view of the recently expanded Hungry Moose Market and Deli. The expansion was completed on Dec. 13, adding over 2000 square feet to the store. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS KAMMON

The expansion began Aug. 19 and was completed, less than four months later, on Dec. 13. The additional 2,000 square feet more than doubled the overall size of the Hungry Moose. “We got to the point [where] we needed more space, more storage, more deli, more delivery, more drinks, but if you track it, it’s just an evolution that the Hungry Moose has been part of Big Sky, and it’s just grown with Big Sky,” Kern said.

He went on to describe that he wanted to keep the same design themes the Hungry Moose has become known for, throughout the expansion, even down to the colors painted on the walls. “It’s a pretty awesome opportunity too, to fine tune our selection and make sure everyone’s got everything they’re looking for,” said Andrew Robin.

A myriad of items were brought in to inhabit the added space; a beer cooler, a small grab-and-go cooler, two flower coolers, a freezer and a new produce cooler top the list of new utilities. More seating space, a soup and salad bar, a vehicle to keep up with shopping deliveries available to any location in Big Sky, custom flower arrangements, and more than 100 wine selections are also joining the Hungry Moose offerings.

“All the different steps and evolution that we’ve seen and I think this is the right step. Everyone asks me what is my dad thinking about all this right now,” said Robin, donning his late father’s Christmas hat as he spoke. “I honestly think he would be really excited to see it the way it is. It’s kind of continuing on the legacy in a positive [and] pretty exciting way.”

To accompany the expanded seating area, which sits adjacent to the Hungry Moose patio, Kern hopes to bring events such as open mic nights, live music and even poetry readings to the community. “We’ll be able to do events out there. We can play music on the patio, we have lights, it has a railing,” he said.

The finishing touch on the expansion was the installation of a weathervane on the top of the Hungry Moose roof—as if it was meant to be, the weathervane happened to belong to Big Sky founder, Chet Huntley, and features a moose.

Kern even hung a plaque in the seating area paying homage to Huntley. It’s a fitting gesture—just as the former broadcaster left his mark on the community, so too has the Hungry Moose impacted the community indefinitely.



What is the most enjoyable activity around Big Sky during the holidays?



Madeline Thunder
Big Sky, MT

"I think the resort is always fun. Around the holidays it does have, like a fun, crazy energy. It's super busy, but you always see Santa skiing around and stuff ... I think that's a good point. Kind of like hang on to your friends and you make due and you maybe chop down a Christmas tree and put it in your little house."



Zack O'Bryant
Big Sky, MT

"I would say just being around friends. Doing fun things with your friends. They kind of become your family, in a sense, I guess ... I'd say being in a ski town, in the mountains, the weather is good for Christmas and the spirits there."



Jimmy Jambo
Bozeman, MT

"During the holidays, you know just getting hot chocky and just hot lapping Ramcharger. I would say that's probably my answer."



Lila Scott
Big Sky, MT

"Skiing is definitely the most enjoyable activity during the holidays and, really, just the whole winter."

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OUTLAW News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners

TEDxBigSky 2020: Connection

What began in 1984 as a conference to share new ideas surrounding technology, entertainment and design has become the most renowned speaker series in the world. TED Talks now encompass nearly any conceivable topic, and occur around the globe in more than 100 different languages.

On Jan. 25, 2020 and for the fourth year in a row, the independently organized version of TED called TEDx is bringing a fascinating group of speakers to tell their unique and groundbreaking stories related to the 2020 event's theme: "Connection."

Outlaw Partners—the media, marketing and events company that also publishes this

newspaper—launched the idea in 2017 to bring a TEDx event to Big Sky when its Media and Events Director Ersin Ozer reflected on journalism and the stories coming out of the region.

"I was inspired by our magazine, Mountain Outlaw, to put on this event on a live platform," said Ozer, who chose a group of Big Sky community members to help bring the concept to fruition. "Outlaw has mastered the art of storytelling ... so producing TEDxBigSky brings it all full circle."

Please allow us to introduce you to six of the 11 2020 TEDxBigSky speakers:



Chris Adams

Chris Adams has been living with Crohn's disease for more than 33 years and has endured countless surgeries and complications. His unique outlook on life has enabled him to persevere, overcome and connect with a world that he could have never imagined. Adams is now the Board President for the Northwest Chapter of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and works closely with Pearl Jam's Mike McCready (also a Crohn's patient) on raising awareness and finding a cure for those affected by IBD.



Riley Becker

Riley Becker is a senior at Big Sky Discovery Academy who fell in love with being outside from the very start, and by growing up in Big Sky, Montana, it isn't hard to imagine how she cultivated a love and appreciation for the environment. As an outdoor enthusiast, Becker's learned that nothing brings more joy and tranquility than indulging in nature. She's been fortunate enough to see different parts of our world and quickly grew to understand the importance of the environment and

how it connects people around the globe. She loves doing nothing more than skiing, and can't imagine the following generations experiencing life without the presence of a healthy ecosystem.

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Christine Baker

Christine Baker started skiing Big Sky with her family in 1981. She fell in love with the mountain, the town, the people, the skiing and everything that came with it. In 1982 (at age 6), she told her parents she was going to stay and she'd see them next year. "What are you going to do?" her parents asked. "Be a ski instructor," Baker replied. It didn't happen that year, but eventually it did.



Bob Hall

Bob Hall has worn many hats over the years: Wall Street executive, fashion industry investor, philanthropist, outdoorsman and dad, all while skiing 100 days a year. He lost his father at a young age and has always had more ambition than brains leading to a full life of challenges. Hall has filled several accidental chairman roles in public companies, independent schools and even the U.S. Biathlon board.

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Bobby Gill

Bobby Gill leads development and communications for the Savory Institute, a nonprofit that teaches farmers, ranchers and pastoralist communities across the globe to regenerate the world's grasslands with Holistic Management. Whether it be the Maasai in Kenya, gauchos in Patagonia, shepherders in Norway or cowboys in the American West, the Savory Global Network has trained land managers of all types to utilize the land-regenerating potential of Holistic Management within their cultural and ecological context. Since 2009, Savory has begun regenerating over 25 million acres of desertifying grasslands to address the root cause of food, water and climate security.



Molly Sides and Whitney Petty

Molly Sides and Whitney Petty are founding members of Seattle based all-female rock n' roll band, Thunderpussy. Since the band's formation in 2015, they have toured extensively throughout the U.S., U.K., Canada and Europe. In 2017, the band signed with Stardog/Republic records and the following year released their eponymous debut followed by the extended play, "Milk It," in 2019. Thunderpussy is dedicated to sparking conversation, connectivity and building community through shared experience wherever they go.

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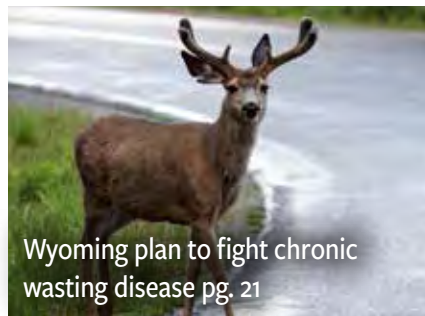


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SECTION 2: ENVIRONMENT & OUTDOORS



Wyoming plan to fight chronic wasting disease pg. 21



Citizen panel discusses grizzly-human conflict pg. 23



NCRS grants conservation dollars pg. 28

Proposed legislation restructures fish and wildlife agency funding

Would allocate additional funds to tribal wildlife programs



Pronghorn crawl through a fence in the Madison Valley. PHOTO BY KIT FISCHER

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

BOZEMAN – In the early 1900s, many notable wildlife species were disappearing. Wolves were nearly eliminated from the Lower 48 by the mid-century, the abundant grizzly bears witnessed by the Lewis and Clark Expedition had been siloed into less than 2 percent of their historical range, and the passenger pigeon, once the most abundant bird in North America, was officially declared extinct.

Citizens of the United States took note, and in 1937, legislation was enacted that is now known as the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, intended to create funding for conservation. Also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, this bill imposes an excise tax on the sale of firearms, bows, arrows and ammunition, generating revenue that is ultimately doled out among the nation's state wildlife agencies—the entities responsible for overseeing management of the nation's wildlife. Those dollars are then applied to qualified wildlife or public access projects and hunter education programs.

There's a catch though: The funding is legally targeted at game and sportfish species, meaning that projects to help westslope cutthroat trout or bighorn sheep qualify, but wildlife agencies largely lack the funds to conserve non-game species like songbirds or bats.

In July 2019, a bill known as Recovering America's Wildlife Act was introduced by U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.) and U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-Neb.) that would amend the Pittman-Robertson Act so as to provide an additional \$1.3 billion in annual funds specifically for use in conservation projects for species of greatest conservation need and species listed under the Endangered Species Act, as well as key habitats and plants. Animals recently delisted from the Endangered Species Act would have dedicated funding to ensure they don't end up back on the list.

This bipartisan legislation, currently working its way through the House of Representatives, would also make available \$97.5 million annually to tribal wildlife agencies; this aspect of the act is a new addition to a similar piece of failed legislation introduced in 2018.

If passed, the bill would allocate dollars from the U.S. Treasury fund and would require a 25 percent non-federal match in order for a project to qualify.

In a joint statement released by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director Martha Williams and Rich Janssen, director of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Natural Resources Department, the wildlife managers spoke on the importance of interagency cooperation, noting that additional funds generated by the new legislation would aid in this effort.

"Fish and wildlife don't see government borders, and the state of Montana shares authority to manage wildlife with Montana's tribal nations," Williams and Janssen said. "Joint management is complicated and requires careful coordination, and is not only worth it, but the only way we can protect the resources that are so important to us all."

"The Recovering America's Wildlife Act would expand the ability of FWP and CSKT to take conservation action for many fish and wildlife species that have been traditionally overlooked," they added. "Working together, we could help prevent more of Montana's wildlife from becoming endangered."

According to a press release by FWP, use of the new funds, of which the agency could see as much as \$26 million, would be guided by the State Wildlife Act Plan, direction from the citizen commission and legislative approval.

"Imagine a source of funding that allows states to better steward wildlife and habitat so that the species won't need the protection of the Endangered Species Act," Williams said. "Imagine a renewed focus on partnerships in wildlife education so that we can help get kids outside. Or even, imagine Montana having the funds to best steward the resources that make Montana so special."

While more than 1,000 businesses and conservation organizations from across the nation have endorsed passage of the Recovering America's Fish and Wildlife Act in a letter, some have raised concerns that the legislation is not enough, as the bill requires only a minimum of 10 percent of the funding apportioned to the agencies to be used in the recovery of federally threatened or endangered species.

According to a statement issued on behalf of Defenders of Wildlife and the Center for Biological Diversity, "Given the extinction crisis our planet now faces, Congress must enact legislation that would guarantee significant funding to combat extinction and to conserve imperiled species. While the Recovering America's Wildlife Act includes new funding for imperiled wildlife and habitat conservation, the bill does not focus sufficient resources on the most imperiled species, those listed under the Endangered Species Act."

"It would be a terrible lost opportunity if Congress were to create a historic new funding stream for wildlife that doesn't strongly respond to the existential threat facing the more than 1,600 species listed as threatened or endangered in the United States."

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act currently has more than 135 cosponsors, both Democrats and Republicans, and is making progress in the House of Representatives.

THE NEW WEST

For Yellowstone ‘winterkeeper,’ solitude a fast-fading reward



BY TODD WILKINSON

With the arrival of the solstice, we’re now officially entering winter. But consider just a few of the many paradoxes and ironies swirling around Yellowstone “winterkeeper” Steven Fuller.

Nearly half a century ago, when Fuller arrived in Yellowstone, the notion of human-caused climate change was, at best, a scientific abstraction. Now it’s regarded as not only the greatest threat to sublimely frigid winters he’s known and documented, but also stands to leave parts of Yellowstone that he relates to intimately as unrecognizable a century hence.

Today, legions of young people might daydream of having Fuller’s job in the middle of America’s first national park, but back in 1973 when he was hired as the only applicant, his position was regarded as a notorious hardship post where others had gone crazy—like being sent to a gulag on the movie set for “The Shining.”

As record numbers of visitors stream past Fuller’s rustic home on a highway below it in summer, his backyard, if based on the recovery of grizzly bears and restoration of wolves to the park, is actually wilder than when he first moved in.

The first time I encountered Fuller was in the summer of 1982. I was a college student who had come West to work in Yellowstone, like thousands of American young people used to do. My job was cooking meals for tourists in the dining room and cafeteria at Canyon Village, located near the north rim of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.

Fuller was there taking photographs at the request of his wife, Angela, who oversaw the operations for park concessionaire TW Services, which over the years morphed into today’s Amfac. In an instant, hundreds of us smiled, our visages frozen in time, and then I seldom caught a glimpse of Fuller again, until four years later.

In 1986, I moved West permanently from a job with the City News Bureau of Chicago, where I wrote stories as a violent crime reporter. I had taken a job with the then-Jackson Hole News and during one of my first free weekends in the autumn, I drove north through the Tetons and spent a couple nights with the Fullers at their rustic home.

The two-bedroom structure rests a quarter-mile above the breathtaking river chasm and adjacent to a rise in topography where the famous Canyon Hotel, designed by architect Robert Reamer, stood until the 1950s when fire destroyed it. (Yes, that old edifice would have been a perfect fit for “The Shining.”)

Steve and I hit it off immediately. Little did we know that only a short distance away that same weekend, wildlife photographer William Tesinsky had been fatally mauled and partially consumed by a grizzly bear. Although covering homicides in the Windy City had, at times, been a hair-raising experience, this was a visceral reminder of what natural wildness meant.

Two years later, as I was covering the historic Yellowstone forest fires of 1988, Fuller’s residence came close to burning to the ground. It has been just one of many potential perils for Fuller: he was thrown from a horse when a startled grizzly rose from its daybed in Hayden Valley; another time he was nearly crushed when four-ton ice sheets tumbled off roofs; he’s stranded snowmobiles and had to walk a dozen miles home at 40 degrees below zero.



Steven Fuller stands with his 8-foot snow saw outside his rustic historic home in the center of Yellowstone. PHOTO COURTESY OF NEAL HERBERT/NPS

Fuller is a living legend, the longest-serving winterkeeper in Yellowstone’s history. Winterkeepers originally were tasked with shoveling the heavy snows off structure rooftops in the park interior to prevent them from collapsing. Modernity, however, is steadily rendering those jobs obsolete, with advances in snow-machine technology making a place like Canyon seem less remote.

“Wilderness?” Fuller says. “There are still wild places in the world, not so many left in the Lower 48 ... enclaves where you can die in a wild natural way, but few of them are out of cell range, certainly not out of SAT phone range, so you don’t have that feeling of autonomous utter self-dependence where the only helping hand lies at the end of your arm. You screw up, you die, or at least suffer the consequences.”

During the mid-1970s, National Geographic published an essay with photographs by Fuller. It was one of the reasons I became enticed by summer employment there. Reading the story today seems like an ancient time.

Amassed over his tenure is an extraordinary portfolio of images he’s personally taken and each carries with it stories. Over the last few years, Fuller has penned a column, “A Life In Wonderland” for the non-profit news outlet Mountain Journal (mountainjournal.org), which I founded. He shares observations and insights about the interior of Yellowstone that put into perspective the notion of the national park as a realm set apart.

“His situation has allowed him to spend an immense amount of contemplative time in a wild landscape in order to develop his way of seeing,” Doug Peacock, the noted author, Green Beret medic in Vietnam, environmental activist, and friend of the winterkeeper told me more than 20 years ago in a story I wrote for The Christian Science Monitor. “Fuller’s great value to us is his way of being the shaman who goes out into ... the other world.”

As former park historian Lee Whittlesey noted, there is unlikely to ever be another like Steve Fuller in Yellowstone, nor a Yellowstone as Fuller has intrepidly witnessed.

Todd Wilkinson is the founder of Bozeman-based Mountain Journal and is a correspondent for National Geographic. He’s also the author of the book Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek about famous Jackson Hole grizzly bear 399.



A higher standard

BY DAVID TUCKER
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Technology is ubiquitous in our 21st-century lives. It permeates our socializing, our shopping, our banking and even our driving. Why not use it to maximize our water conservation?

That's exactly what the Big Sky Water and Sewer District is doing with the implementation of automated metering infrastructure, a system that could have profound effects on local water conservation.

The upgraded meters provide the district with up-to-the-minute readings of water usage among their constituents, which is about 60 percent of Big Sky residents. Now, if there is a dramatic spike in usage, they'll know immediately, which could save countless gallons of water, a limited resource in these parts. Recently, a hotel in Big Sky had a leak, but instead of untold gallons wasting away, the meter picked up the spike and district technicians were able to inform the property managers, saving a lot of water and a lot of money.

"These meters take the guesswork out of monitoring," said Jake Porter, a water technician with BSWSD. "It gets the right reads to the right people at the right time." According to Porter, this will lead to better efficiency and lower costs. The new meters take 720 reads a month, instead of one read every three months.

While cost savings to the customer is reason enough to adopt this new system, water savings to the watershed is perhaps even more important.

"Big Sky is a closed basin," said Emily O'Connor, water conservation program manager at the Gallatin River Task Force. "There are no new surface or connected groundwater rights available. That means all our future water needs must be met with water rights that have already been claimed. Water conservation is one of the top tools Big Sky can utilize in order to ensure that current and

future water needs will be met."

Fewer, smaller leaks mean more water for the Gallatin. More water for the Gallatin means a healthier system, with abundant cold, clear water. Abundant cold, clear water means a healthy fishery and raucous whitewater. Healthy fish mean happy fishermen, and raucous whitewater means thrilled floaters. These meters are one tool in the water-conservation toolbox, and a positive sign that the district is taking proactive steps toward sustainable management.

At this point, 2,400 of the district's 2,800 accounts have the new meters installed, with plans for 100 percent coverage in the coming years. Installation is simple and unobtrusive, and the district intends to roll out a mobile tracking app for customers. The City of Bozeman has a similar platform, and plans to have all meters updated shortly.

"We have an aggressive meter replacement program and are currently on track to have all meters upgraded in the next four years," said Jessica Ahlstrom, water conservation specialist with the City of Bozeman. "We also launched a customer water-use portal, Dropcountr, which allows customers to track their water use and see how their use compares to neighbors and efficiency goals set by the city."

While BSWSD's progress is impressive, 40 percent of Big Sky's water users are not connected to the district system. We encourage those homeowners and businesses to install upgraded meters, as well.

As Big Sky continues to develop, we'll need to implement a variety of water-saving measures to ensure that growth is sustainable. More efficient meters are a solid step forward, a good sign that thoughtful leaders are at the helm, solving problems before they become insurmountable.

David Tucker is the communications manager for the Gallatin River Task Force.

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REFLECTIONS

Thoughts for sustainable living



The cost of plushy fleece

BY KATHY BOUCHARD
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Carbon footprints would be much more understandable if only we could see them, as once we saw oily plumes of smoke roiling from the steel factories of the Great Lakes states in the 1950s. I think of my carbon footprint every time I fly, wondering what my personal cloud of CO₂ would look like. Would it fit in a breadbox, or a Greyhound bus or might I need something like an Olympic swimming pool to contain it?

Until recently, trying to offset my flying by getting carbon neutral was what I considered my biggest personal challenge to sustainability. It may still be, but that was before learning about the industry responsible for 1.7 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year. That footprint exceeds the emissions of all international flights and shipping.

If you're thinking it has something to do with plastic, you're close. Third largest industry by water consumption, the culprit is the fashion industry, 65 percent of whose products are the wearable plastic synthetics named polyester and nylon. Eighty-five percent of this fossil-fuel-based apparel winds up in landfills where it does not decompose. When shipped as donated goods to Central America or Africa, the flood of tee-shirts, hoodies and sweatpants diminishes the market for locally produced fabrics and fashions, hurting struggling economies and further ensuring impoverished folk will continue to look for cheap clothing. And it won't decompose in a foreign landfill either.

Those super soft and plush fleece garments, blankets and teddy bears shed billions of microscopic fibers straight out of the washing machine into a watery environment where no filter is capable of screening all of them, ending up in our lakes and oceans.

Invisible, or nearly so, to humans, those bits and fibers look exactly like food to the tiny occupants of the lowest level in the food chain. As those critters are consumed by ever bigger fish, turtles or marine mammals, the plastic concentration rises. Hundreds of millions of marine animals die from consuming the substance which we so prize for the convenience it affords us.

What to do? Well, forego that fleece, no matter how soft and cuddly. Make your clothes last longer, invest in quality and natural fibers, purchase from vintage or used stores. Be aware of the relative impacts of various fibers like hemp (very good) and nylon (really, awfully, heavily impactful) and all the natural and synthetic fibers in between. Don't forget to account for water consumption and fertilizer impact, especially for your next pair of blue jeans, which will cost the environment an average of 33 kilograms of CO₂. That's about ten times their material weight.

Remember, it's not just your clothing to consider. Textiles are present all over your home in carpets, curtains, bed linens and bath accessories.

I've written before that an externality is a cost of production not born by the producer. It has been reported that the fashion industry must reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2050 to align with a 2 degree rise in global temperature. When we consume cheap clothing or anything else without accounting for the cost in carbon emissions, scarce water or applications of unnatural chemical fertilizers, the externality is inflicted elsewhere. In the end, nature pays.

Kathy Bouchard is a member of the Rotary Club of Big Sky's Sustainability Committee. She has been a Montana resident for twenty years and is inspired to work for sustainability on behalf of her grandchildren.

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New Wyoming plan to fight chronic wasting disease released

BY CHRISTINE PETERSEN
CASPER STAR-TRIBUNE

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) – Chronic wasting disease, an always-fatal ailment that eats away at the brains of infected deer, elk and moose, isn't likely going away on its own.

First identified in the wild in southeast Wyoming in the '80s, it's been slowly spreading east and west like tentacles crawling across a map. Press releases appear regularly showing new animals found with the disease in western Wyoming and Montana. It's already been identified in 84 percent of Wyoming's mule deer herds, 26 states and four Canadian provinces.

Most hunters and wildlife advocates know all of that. What no one knows for sure is what to do about it. A working group in Wyoming made up about 30 people from around the state including outfitters, hunters, conservation groups, ranchers, lawmakers and biologists recently helped produce a 150-page report hoping to offer at least some direction and guidance. It's now out to the public for comment.

Some of the options for dealing with a disease that still mystifies even most wildlife veterinarians will be controversial for portions of Wyoming's hunting community. The report calls for potentially thinning select mule deer herds or populations in specific areas to prevent the disease from spreading. It suggests lowering buck numbers because males carry the disease at a higher rate. The group is also calling for municipalities to create artificial feeding bans to prevent mule deer from unnaturally congregating.

Most of the recommendations in the plan had full consensus of the various group members, said Kristen Gunther, a conservation advocate for the Wyoming Outdoor Council and co-chair of the working group. Something, she added, needs to be done.

"The decision to do nothing is a decision. It has a major cost. If we do nothing, we will continue to watch this disease spread and watch herds increase in CWD prevalence," she said. "It's important to look at the choice to do nothing as a choice and one that will have severe management implications on our herds."

Chronic wasting disease is a prion—a mutated protein that eventually causes holes to form in the host brain. No cure exists and it can't be killed like a bacteria or virus. It's the deer and elk version of mad cow disease in cattle and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans.

It's never been shown to cross the species barrier to humans, but the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization recommend people throw away any meat from infected animals. Researchers may still not know conclusively if it can or can't cross to humans, but they do know the disease is having, and likely will have, population-level impacts on mule deer herds.

Some Wyoming herds have CWD rates in bucks as high as 40 percent. Bucks in a herd around Riverton may have prevalence over 50 percent, though more samples may be needed to produce statistically conclusive results, said Justin Binfet, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Casper wildlife coordinator who worked extensively on the draft plan.

"Not only are we documenting the disease in new areas and out of the state but there are areas outside of the core area where we're seeing high prevalence," he said. "It's not good news for the future of our deer herds, especially mule deer."

Wyoming's current management plan calls for continued monitoring of the disease and staying up to date with research, but little else in terms of active management.

Some of the biggest changes in the draft plan released Dec. 2 are a potential thinning of herds and possible reduction in some artificial feeding.

For reasons scientists don't yet understand, CWD rates are highest in buck deer. Research has shown the more bucks the higher a likelihood for spread, Binfet said.



A mule deer crosses a road in Grand Teton National Park. As state wildlife managers in Wyoming learn more about the prevalence of chronic wasting disease, they are looking toward ways to reduce the spread. NPS PHOTO

The same goes for lowering some herd densities. CWD spreads from contact with an infected animal. Reduced densities, the research shows, potentially reduces transmission.

"With all of this the question in people's minds is, 'Is the cure worse than the disease?'" Binfet said. "It is fair to say there are some places in Wyoming where we have a lot of CWD and have really, really high buck ratios, and you can potentially reduce buck ratios without impacting the overall herd."

The report also calls for a possible end to artificial feeding everywhere except the controversial elk feedgrounds in western Wyoming. Because the feedgrounds have a long history in Wyoming and their own complicated set of issues, Game and Fish plans to tackle figuring out their future in a separate series of meetings.

Whatever happens, Binfet said, decisions to possibly thin herds or reduce buck numbers will be done in areas with sufficient prevalence data on an individual, case-by-case basis alongside local residents and wildlife managers.

While Dax McCarty, outfitter for Wagonhound Land and Livestock near Douglas, acknowledges many of the proposed changes are needed, he also sees that it could be a hard sell for some of the public.

Gunther and Joshua Coursey, the other co-chair of the working group and CEO of the Muley Fanatic Foundation, agree. That's why it's important for the public—hunters, wildlife viewers, advocacy groups, ranchers and others—to be part of the process. Communication, they said, is paramount.

"We need public buy-in and support to manage for the disease and apply best management practices, but you also have to communicate with the public," Gunther said.

And some of the proposed changes will need to be tried for upward of a decade, not just a season or two, Binfet said. Along with the management changes will also be possible research projects studying the impact of the tweaks to hunting seasons and other possible contributing factors.

Binfet is launching a long-term study with the University of Wyoming to look at the impact of predators such as mountain lions on the spread of the disease as well as how transmission occurs between mother and fawn.

The working group will reconvene in February to discuss any potential changes to the plan, which will then be submitted to the Game and Fish Commission in the spring.

"We're at a point where people are interested and want something done," Gunther said. "And that is reflected in the consensus and recommendations from the group."

INSIDE YELLOWSTONE



Yellowstone's winter season kicks off

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. – Roads opened Dec. 15 in Yellowstone National Park for travel by snowcoaches and snowmobiles.

Visitors will be able to travel the park's interior roads on commercially-guided snowmobiles and snowcoaches from the North, West and South Entrances. Visitors who have proper permits can also take non-commercially guided snowmobile trips.

The East Entrance Road over Sylvan Pass will open for oversnow travel on Sunday, Dec. 22.

The road from the park's North Entrance at Gardiner through Mammoth Hot Springs to Cooke City is plowed and open to wheeled-vehicle travel all year.

Plan ahead for your winter adventure. In addition to unique winter travel opportunities, Yellowstone also offers a variety of activities such as ranger-led programs, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Weather is extremely unpredictable and road closures or delays can occur with little or no warning. Please come prepared. Carry personal emergency survival equipment and dress appropriately for outside activities in extremely cold weather.

Lodging and services are limited during winter. The following list highlights what winter visitor services are available:

Old Faithful

Old Faithful Visitor Education Center, Geyser Grill, Bear Den Gift Shop and Ski Shop, Old Faithful Snow Lodge and Cabins, Obsidian Dining Room



Snowmobiles and snowcoaches passing bison on a road in Yellowstone National Park. NPS PHOTO

Mammoth Hot Springs

Mammoth Hotel, Mammoth Hotel Map Room Barista/Bar, Dining Room, Terrace Grill, Mammoth Gift Shop and Ski Shop, Albright Visitor Center, Mammoth General Store, medical clinic, campground, post office

Service Stations

24-hour gasoline pumps are available at Mammoth Hot Springs, Tower Junction, Canyon Village, Fishing Bridge, Grant Village and Old Faithful.

Additionally, there are warming huts at Canyon, Fishing Bridge, Indian Creek, Madison, Mammoth Hot Springs, Old Faithful and West Thumb. Some huts are staffed during business hours and provide food, restrooms and water.

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Citizen panel discusses grizzly-human conflict, tribal management

Governor hears challenges

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

MISSOULA – Gerald “Buzz” Cobell looked out around the room. Holding the microphone close to his mouth, he spoke plainly.

“Bears are a part of our culture,” he said. “Bears are a part of our religion.”

Cobell, director of the Blackfeet Nation Fish and Wildlife, was speaking before a crowded conference room Dec. 4 and 5 at the University of Montana, but his words were directed toward the 18-member council seated at the front of the room.

“The bear is our brother and that’s what we know,” Cobell said, describing an oral tradition in which a bear aided an injured warrior and brought him home. “That’s what my chief told me.”

The citizen panel, dubbed the Governor’s Grizzly Bear Advisory Council, convened for the third time as part of a yearlong process to develop recommendations for the state to discern how people and grizzly bears can coexist as the bruin population continues to expand around Yellowstone and Glacier national parks.

These recommendations will go to Gov. Steve Bullock and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and could be used to create legislation and guide the development of a statewide grizzly bear management plan. It would set the stage for improved coexistence and further grizzly bear recovery in the small population in the Cabinet-Yaaks and reintroduce them to the vacant Bitterroot ecosystem.

A panel of four tribal wildlife specialists presented their grizzly bear management programs to the council as a part of a larger look at how grizzly bears are currently managed in Montana after the council spent previous meetings learning about current grizzly bear legal status, research, distribution and connectivity. The tribal presenters were followed by six of the state’s bear managers, as well as staff from Glacier National Park.

Cassie Powell, a bear conflict specialist for the Blackfeet, handles situations when bears and humans collide, such as when a bear kills one of the 66,432 cows that live year round on the 1.5-million-acre reservation, or when one of the 10,405 residents leaves out trash that attracts a bear. During the busiest times of the year she works nonstop, on call day and night to handle bear-related issues.

“Those things aren’t glorious. We have to go chasing cans and fixing fence ... It isn’t just trapping bears,” she said. “You don’t have a life from the time they wake up to the time they go to sleep. There’s no weekends off [and] you don’t get to go to the Bahamas. You’re stuck running down the road because there’s a bear on the side of the road that you have to haze off because it’s going to get habituated.”

Hilary Cooley, grizzly bear recovery coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks wildlife bureau chief Ken McDonald; and Kraig Glazier, Wildlife Services district supervisor, shared step-by-step how decisions are made when a bear gets in trouble.

It’s an interagency approach. A homeowner typically calls the regional bear manager—in the Big Sky area it’s Kevin Frey—and describes the problem. If it’s livestock depredation, the manager works with Wildlife Services to get on site and complete a joint investigation to confirm how the animal died. If it’s a human safety risk, such as a bear too close to a home or getting into trash, the bear manager travels to the site to assess the situation.



The 18-member Grizzly Bear Advisory Council stands with Gov. Steve Bullock on Dec. 5 at the University of Montana in Missoula during their third meeting. PHOTO BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

In some cases, depending on the severity of the problem, they might haze the bear away, while other times they’ll try to trap the bear and relocate it. If the bear has repeatedly caused problems, the bear manager may consider lethal removal. These decisions are made jointly between the bear manager, his or her supervisors and Cooley via conference calls and they are based on guidelines established in 1986.

Following presentations about dealing with conflict, the council also heard about measures to prevent conflict, such as cost-share electric fence programs or guardian dogs, as well as how agencies and nonprofits are working to educate the public on living and recreating with bears.

Additionally, Gov. Steve Bullock attended a morning session on Dec. 5, asking the council to share some of the challenges related to living with grizzly bears.

“I’m putting great stock ... in what the council’s work is going to do,” Bullock said. “We are facing a herculean task ... You are the leaders in this state in shaping this understanding.”

Council members shared with the governor concerns over promoting a landscape that is conducive to grizzly bears and improving social tolerance, how recreation plays into the picture, and the need for consistent resources and funding that supports research, conflict prevention and response.

“There’s such a disconnect between rural and urban Montanans and the way that we see things,” said council member Trina Jo Bradley, a rancher in Valier. “We need to find that common ground and we need to understand each other.”

By the end of the two-day meeting, and after the third meeting geared toward fact gathering, council members were anxious to begin finding solutions. They closed the meeting with the charge of brainstorming potential ideas and planned to discuss early approaches at the next meeting in January as the first step toward formulating consensus-driven recommendations.

The council’s next meeting is scheduled Jan. 14-15 at the KwaTaq-Nuk Resort in Polson. Meetings are open to the public and the council accepts public comment at a scheduled time on the agenda. They also take public input online.

Visit fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/grizzlyBear/gbac.html for more information about the Governor’s Grizzly Bear Advisor Council and to submit public comment.

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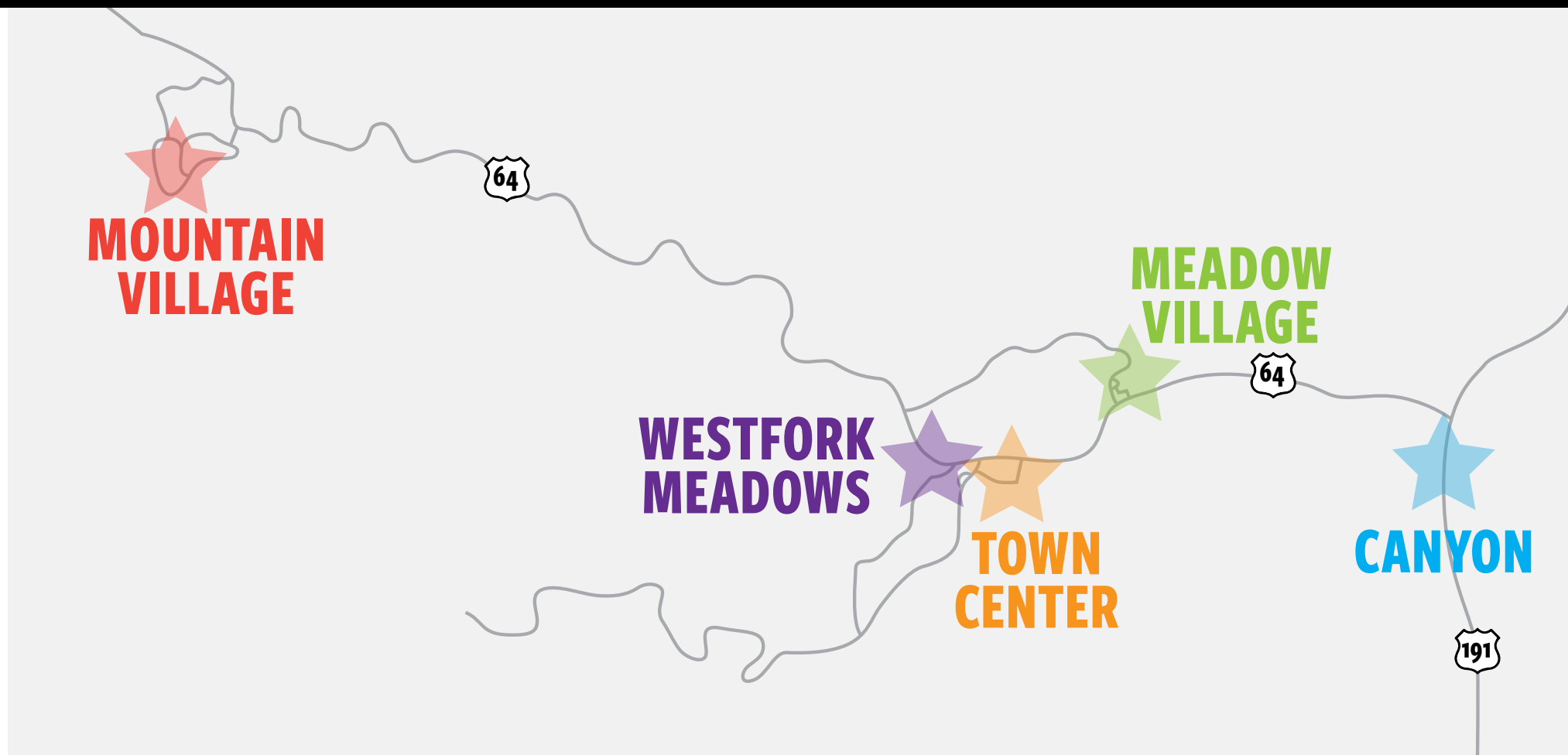
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Winter town trails

BY SARA MARINO
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Dust off your snowshoes, fat bikes and cross-country skis because the winter town trails are back.

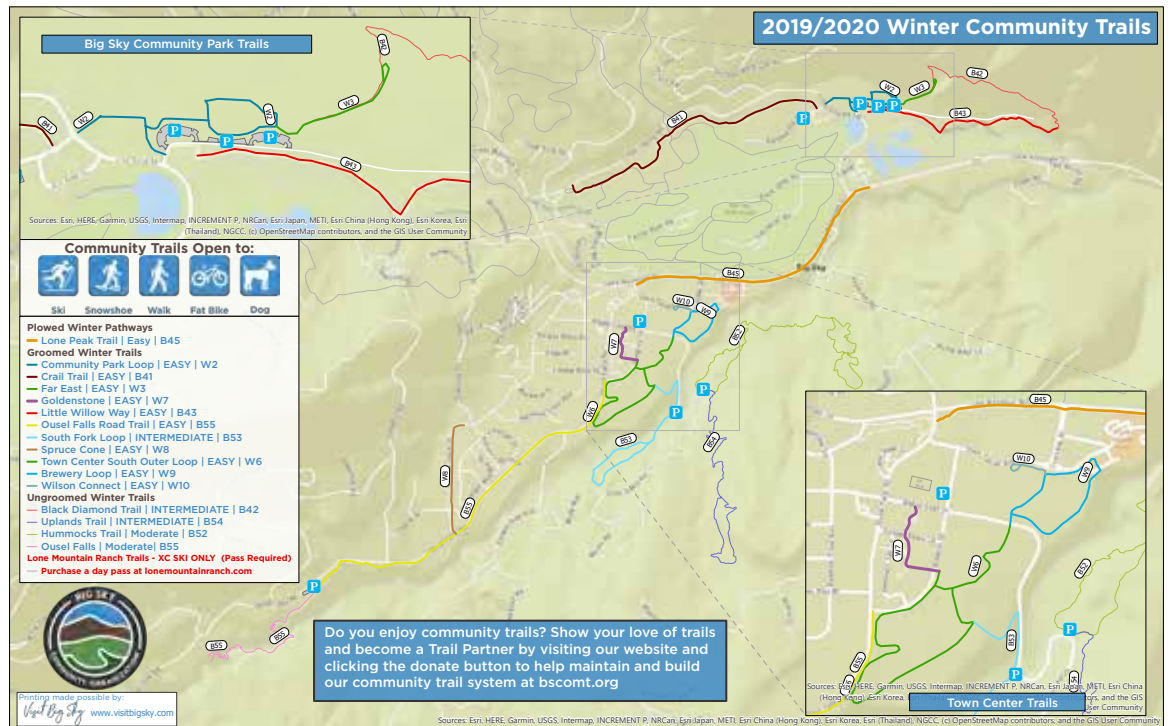
Big Sky Community Organization is in full swing for its second season of grooming dog-friendly multi-use trails in Town Center and the Big Sky Community Park in Meadow Village.

This year's trail network looks similar to last year's, with the addition of connector trails along Spruce Cone and Goldenstone. There are a total of 12 maintained trails covering nearly 14 kilometers to enjoy, with one plowed path (1.6 km) and 11 groomed (12.2 km), with an additional 8.5 km of four ungroomed trails. Most of the trails are rated "easy" and provide a great way to get out for a quick lunch-hour workout or consider adding a few trails together for a longer tour.

Throughout the trail network there are several dog waste stations with trash cans, making it easy to show respect for the trails and fellow users by picking up after your dog.

These trails are open to the public free of charge, but there are many behind the scenes resources that make it happen, from weekly grooming and snowmobile maintenance to emptying trash cans and stocking dog waste stations. To help off-set these costs, BSCO has launched a voluntary Trail Partner program. An annual donation helps BSCO keep Big Sky's community trails maintained 365 days a year.

Winter trail maps are available at the BSCO office, Big Sky Chamber of Commerce,



Lone Mountain Ranch and several local businesses. Hope to see you out on the trails this winter!

Visit bscomt.org/trail-partner to learn more about the Trail Partner program.

Sara Marino is the Big Sky Community Organization community development manager. BSCO engages and leads people to recreational and enrichment opportunities through thoughtful development of partnerships, programs and places.

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BEAR BASICS WITH BERNADETTE

DO YOUR PART, BE BEAR SMART

How trash can change hibernation

BY KRIS INMAN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

By December, bears, for the most part, have entered their winter dens. It is a natural process for bears who are not physiologically adapted, like the lynx or the wolverine who have snowshoe-size feet that allow them to float across the snow. It is also a lean time for natural food.

Male bears or young female bears who will not need the security a den provides for newborn cubs are the last to den. But nature can also influence when bears den. On low snow years with an abundance of natural foods, bears may delay den entry.

People can shift this natural process for bears too. In communities like Big Sky, where a community abuts wild areas, bears with access to food were once “backcountry” bears eating natural foods but slowly become “frontcountry” bears.

These frontcountry bears, who have access to trash throughout the season, can shift not only their foraging behavior but the denning behavior too.

Too many states are seeing conflict calls in the winter months. In 2009, a great snow year for Nevada, the Nevada Department of Wildlife didn’t see conflict calls decline to zero, instead, during the winter, they had 41 percent fewer calls than in the summer and fall. Trash was the cause.

A colleague at the Wildlife Conservation Society, Jon Beckmann, along with other bear biologists studied this trend in behavior. They found that in 5 of 38 urban areas, where trash was available, bears never entered dens.

“In four more urban communities, bears denned under decks and appeared to key in on trash pick-up days, emerging from their dens to take advantage of this food source,” Beckmann said.

To ensure we don’t inadvertently make this shift in denning behavior for Big Sky’s bears, Beckmann suggests one key thing: “Use bear-resistant trash cans throughout the year, even when bears are in their dens.”

If shifting denning behavior is not reason enough to keep trash from bears, do it to make it a practiced behavior so you won’t be caught unaware when bears emerge from their dens in the spring.

For those that rent your home as a vacation rental, be sure the vacationers you are hosting are aware they need to keep trash secured. This fall, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks received calls from vacation renters. “Unaware that bears are around, they stored their garbage in bags on the deck and had an unwelcomed visitor,” FWP bear biologist Kevin Frey said.

As snow flies, this certainly is the time of merriment—your family, business and vacation renters will produce a lot of trash that needs to be stored away from bears. Keep extra trash in the garage with the door always closed.

Keep your property, bears and yourself safe by breaking the cycle of rewarding bears with trash. Ask L&L Site Services or Republic Services for a bear-resistant trash can. Use it all year long and make bear smart practices a natural part of this community’s culture so we keep Big Sky wild.

Remember to follow Bernadette Bear on social media @bearsmartbigsky to learn how to make Big Sky’s story a positive one for bears, people and wild places.

Kris Inman manages the Partnerships and Engagement Program for the Wildlife Conservation Society and oversees the Bear Smart Big Sky campaign.

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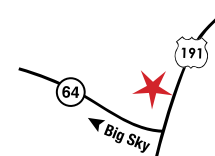
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NRCS grants conservation dollars to Gallatin Valley

EBS STAFF

BOZEMAN – The Natural Resources Conservation Service has recently renewed a commitment for land conservation in the Gallatin Valley. Through the service’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program, \$3.8 million has been awarded to the Gallatin Valley Land Trust to fund conservation easements and land stewardship projects in the valley.

“NRCS has been a critical partner for conservation easements, providing funding to purchase conservation easements from willing landowners to conserve working lands, clean water and wildlife habitat in our rapidly growing valley,” GVLT communications and outreach director EJ Porth told EBS in an email. “GVLT is thrilled to continue focusing on the Gallatin Valley with such a committed partner.”

The majority of these federal dollars will go directly to farmers and ranchers actively working to conserve their open landscapes to protect water quality, maintain prime farmland and reduce urban sprawl.

GVLT first received the NRCS grant in 2015 and used the funds to acquire seven conservation easements that total over 2,600 acres, as well as complete six land stewardship projects.

“This focused partnership project has brought together the resources to conserve more open space and address resource concerns on more acres in the Gallatin Valley than [NRCS or GVLT] could have done individually,” said Tom Watson, NRCS state conservationist for Montana, in a press release.

The grant renewal creates a pool of money that is allocated on a project-by-project basis and funds stay within Gallatin Valley. This focused conservation effort targets land-use conversion and urban sprawl within a burgeoning



Nearly 600 acres of prime agricultural soil west of the Gallatin River was recently converted into a conservation easement through a partnership with the landowners and the Gallatin Valley Land Trust. This easement was funded in part by the NRCS and the Gallatin Valley Open Lands Program and a new \$3.8 million grant by the NRCS will continue to support this type of stewardship in Gallatin Valley. NRCS PHOTO

Gallatin Valley, home to fertile soil and a deep agricultural heritage.

“At a time when the Gallatin Valley is facing unprecedented growth, this special allocation of funds will increase the pace of conservation in the valley,” said GVLT program director Brendan Weiner in a press release. “Thank you to the NRCS for strategically allocating these funds to a place that is committed to conserving its agricultural heritage and has a proven record of conservation success.”

Last year Gallatin Valley voters renewed the Gallatin County Open Lands Program, which provides local matching funds to the federal NRCS program.



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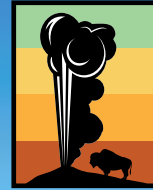
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State hunting season sees fewer hunters, challenging weather

Public input sought on future hunting season dates

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

BOZEMAN – Montana’s general hunting season ended Dec. 1 with lower hunter numbers and varied success rates in southwest Montana during the season’s sixth and final weekend.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks operated four check stations in Region 3 during the fifth weekend of the general deer and elk hunt, and seven check stations during the sixth and final weekend. Overall, hunter numbers were lower this year than in 2018, and relatively mild weather conditions made it difficult for hunters to find game in some areas.

Overall, hunter numbers were lower in 2019 than the year before, but success rates in many areas were within long-term averages. Weather always plays a significant role in hunter participation and success. This year, strong winter storms kept many hunters home during opening weekend. But frequent freeze-thaw cycles made it difficult for hunters to find game in some areas throughout the remainder of the season.

FWP is beginning its biennial season setting process and will be seeking public input. Meetings have been scheduled throughout Region 3 where members of the public are invited to attend and provide feedback on proposals for hunting seasons over the next two years. Meetings will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on the following dates:

Jan. 7 Helena Montana WILD	Jan. 14 Butte Butte Brewing Company
Jan. 8 Whitehall Whitehall High School	Jan. 15 Livingston Elks Club
Jan. 9 Dillon Beaverhead Search and Rescue	Jan. 16 Bozeman FWP Region 3 Headquarters

Visit go.usa.gov/xpduC for a complete list of proposed changes. Comments can be submitted in the following ways:

- Verbally at the season setting meetings listed above
- Online at go.usa.gov/xpduC
- Emailed to fwprwd@mt.gov
- In writing, mailed to FWP Wildlife Division, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701

All comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Jan. 22, 2020. The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission will make final adoptions at its next meeting on Feb. 6, 2020.

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SECTION 3:
ARTS,
ENTERTAINMENT &
DINING



‘Montana Collages’ captures a sense of home

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

GALLATIN GATEWAY – When Tika Altemoeller first stepped onto the Bozeman airport tarmac in 2001, she was struck by, of all things, the air. It was so fresh, so pure, tinged with inexplicable notes of Christmas.

The sensation was curious—it felt like coming home, despite the thousands of miles between the Gallatin Valley and her native Germany.

“I remember that air ... I was like, ‘Wow, OK. I’m here,’” said Altemoeller, setting a fresh cup of herbal tea onto her Gallatin Gateway kitchen table, a worthy companion to a colorful plate of German Christmas cookies at its center. “I’ve always had this feeling of home here, from the very first moment I arrived.”

Today, Altemoeller lives with her husband in Gallatin Gateway, an often-discounted township that in reality—and quite naturally—boasts the very best of both Big Sky and Bozeman. Complete with wide-open spaces, varied terrain, impressive views and plenty of access to the two populations and amenities it splits, sans the incessant crush of out-of-towners, the original spirit of Montana is alive and well in Gateway.

And their home, custom-made from repurposed shipping containers, is tactfully positioned in a sprawling field of grasses to allow maximum synthesis with the environs that cradle it.

It’s there, bordered by aspen groves and the foothills of the Gallatins, Altemoeller’s art has evolved, manifesting into the “Montana Collages.”

“More than anywhere else, I get the feeling that I’m at home here because we built this house, and it was such a cool process to do it,” Altemoeller said. “I was like, ‘I can make collages about Montana with the theme of home.’”

Her first consistent foray into collage began with Japanese-stylized pieces inspired by “Instructions for The Cook,” a roughly 800-year-old text written by Dōgen Zenji, a Japanese Buddhist priest, writer, poet, philosopher and founder of the Sōtō school of Zen.

Those pieces recruited an amalgamation of Japanese characters and magazine cutouts, which Altemoeller cut and shaped with precision.

But with the her most recent series, “Montana Collages,” she worries less about hard edges, focusing on combining texture, original photographs of Montana, color, text and fashion magazine rippings into unique pieces that honor her perceptions.

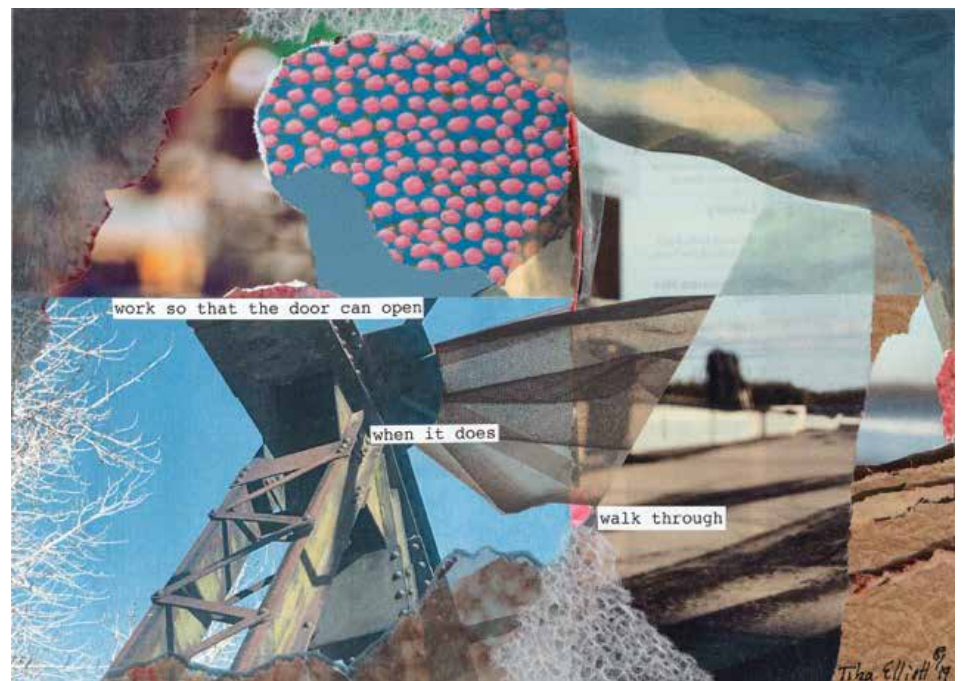
“I like to just rip it (magazine pages) and see what happens,” she said, underscoring the wildness of the spaces that inspire the pieces. “Sometimes, I’ll see the pieces begin to make a collage on their own on the table.”

For Altemoeller, the process of collecting those intimate imprints of Montana is not complicated—she simply heads out into the abundant landscapes with an iPhone, snapping shots that catch the eye.

“I never pretend I’m a photographer,” she said. “I have my phone, I see things, I take a picture of them.”

Working from a rustic, barn-like studio space roughly a mile from her home, she assembles those snapshots and clippings and words into working compositions—each rendered unique with its own tones and celebrations of Montana.

Even the mundane, such as a street sign and a stop sign, are essential, and the end result is a snapshot of her insight into The Last Best Place.



Altemoeller’s reverence for Montana and the home it has provided is apparent in every ‘Montana Collage.’ COLLAGES COURTESY OF TIKA ALTEMOELLER

A stalk of grass; a delicate pile of snow; the crusted metal of a bridge; a field traced by telephone pole lines; these are all worthy features, no matter their inconspicuous presence. To quote a Montana Collage:

home

**sky, mountains,
rivers, grass**

not this, not that

within

Along with making collages in homage of Montana, Altemoeller is regularly commissioned for custom pieces; for more information and to purchase a collage, she can be reached at tika.altemoeller@gmail.com, her website thestudiotika.com, or via her Instagram account [@tikaelliot](https://www.instagram.com/tikaelliot)

Mountain Yarns:

The power of storytelling

BY MIRA BRODY
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

BOZEMAN – Inside the warehouse walls pocked with colorful climbing holds, sit intimidating steel structures and giant weight racks used to hone the body to better move up and over mountains, locals gather to listen to stories of adventure: stories of fear, death, pain, failure and triumph.

For millennia—before we could even write—humans have gathered to bask in the art of storytelling. In Bozeman it happens once a month at The Mountain Project, a mountain athlete training gym located a stone's throw from the city's historic Story Mill district.

"I'm going to read you a story," begins local author Al Kesselheim, the first of three speakers who opens a book in front of an audience of about 50, a spectrum of puffy jackets. "And we can pretend we're all sitting together around a fire."

Mountain Yarns, a community storytelling series organized by Mountain Project coach Colleen Shields and owner and head coach Mike Wolfe, began last year in an effort to gather the community during some of the longer, colder evenings of the year. There's no campfire but there is beer and good company. On the first Thursday of every month from November through March, three speakers will present their tale of adventure—this month's theme: partners.

"We created Mountain Yarns as a way to bring our community together, in person, through live storytelling," Shields says. "So many stories and experiences these days are shared over social media and the majority of the time we only see the highlights. Our hope was to create an evening where the community could come together to connect, share and interact."

Kesselheim opened with an intense passage of survival from his book "Threading the Currents: A Paddler's Passion for Water." Matt Madsen spoke of his human-powered ascent of Denali with his partner via bike, foot, ski and raft. Whit Magro shared a journey of friendship and loss following a five-year venture resulting in a new 2,000-foot free route dubbed "Gambling in the Winds," on Wyoming's Mount Hooker. This last project started with Hayden Kennedy, a talented climber who passed away in October of 2017.

"As soon as that death happened, there was this immediate need to put this thing back together as a sort of a way to grieve and move forward," says Magro, backdropped by a projected photo of the crew scattering a Ziploc bag of Kennedy's ashes.

Outside a train rumbles by, its horn piercing the quiet room for a moment. We're close enough to hear the rhythmic clamor of the tracks. "Bad things happen," Magro adds. "You lose friends, but that doesn't



Bozeman author Al Kesselheim reads to the audience at The Mountain Project's monthly Mountain Yarns storytelling series on Dec. 5. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY

mean you have to give up."

The relationship of storytelling and mountain pursuits is a theme that resonates during Mountain Yarns. It's a form of therapy we feel drawn to, perhaps more than others, in these oft-secluded ski towns.

"Mountain communities suffer a lot from mental health issues and isolation," Madsen says. "I used to work in Summit County, Colorado, for the Family Resource Center and we'd actually work on a lot of storytelling stuff because it's a great way to bring people together."

Storytelling is also a source of inspiration, says Nick Traux of Uphill Pursuits, a new mountaineering shop in Bozeman. "We want to be able to share the every-person's experience," says Traux, who began hosting his own storytelling series at Uphill as well. The first is on Jan. 23.

"Not everyone's a Conrad," he said, as Conrad Anker himself held a hand up in farewell and exited the store. "Not everyone's the sponsored athlete. A lot of people are doing those things on a similar level but those stories don't get press. It's a means to share that thread."

The Mountain Project encourages everyone who has a meaningful story related to researching or exploring the outdoors. Each month the team invites a different local nonprofit to which attendees can donate, and in practice with Montana hospitality there is always plenty of beer to go around, donated by a local brewery.

"It's a strong source of inspiration for people," says Kesselheim just before his presentation, hand wrapped around a worn copy of his novel. "It's important to pass on ideas and traditions and emotions. Storytelling is critical."



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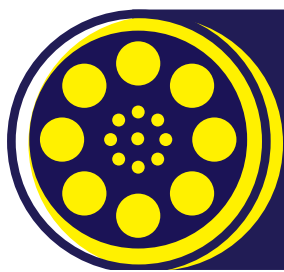


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REEL REVIEW

A Streaming Christmas

BY ANNA HUSTED
EBS FILM CRITIC

I have little to say about the 21st century's so-called streaming wars except that what was once an affordable way to watch TV and movies is now more expensive and complicated. I am as overwhelmed as you likely are by the unlimited possibilities fostered by the dozens of streaming services available; and I continue to be irked by the fact that you still can't seem to find that one movie you want to watch because it's on a different streaming service than the one or two or three you already subscribe to.

Anna Claus to the rescue: I've tried to cut through the fat to find some Christmas gems from the more popular services to help you make it through the holidays with less stress.

"Diane" (2019)

Disclaimer: "Diane" is not a typical Christmas movie as it lacks the jolly nature of most holiday pictures. Director Kent Jones' "Diane" follows the titular character as she navigates middle-age, how to handle her addict son, and the loss of her cousin—all around the holidays. While this film is not particularly uplifting, it is a beautiful portrait of a woman in the second half of her life. You will most likely see this film again on my top films of 2019 list.

Where to stream it: Hulu

"It's a Wonderful Life" (1946)

If you or your family have never seen this exceptional Frank Capra picture, then do so immediately. "It's a Wonderful Life" is a great film for its Dickensian themes and well-rounded characters. While Amazon Prime offers the color and black and white versions, watch it in black and white because that is how it was originally released. The cinematography captures the light and shadow that the color version does not reflect.

Where to stream it: Amazon Prime

"White Christmas" (1954)

"White Christmas" is one of my favorite movies of all time. Part of this is due to nostalgia, part due to the themes of war and PTSD (Merry Christmas!) and because every song is a hit.

Where to stream it: Kanopy

"Rare Exports" (2010)

Yes, you'll have to read subtitles, but I promise it's worth it. "Rare Exports" is a Finnish horror comedy about finding the real Santa frozen in ice and digging him up in time for Christmas. The unknown problem is this Santa is more Krampus and less Kringle.

Where to stream it: Hulu, Kanopy, Shudder

"Home Alone" (1990)

After you've caught up with Joe Pesci in "The Irishman" switch to the newly minted Disney+ streaming service for his classic role as Harry in "Home Alone." Netflix recently featured it in their new series "The Movies That Made Us" for its massive cultural impact and fanbase—need more?

Where to stream it: Disney+

"A Muppet Christmas Carol" (1992)

"A Muppet Christmas Carol" is my favorite of all renditions and remakes of Charles Dickens' timeless tale, including "Scrooged." The Muppets are family-friendly, clever and amusing. Dickens' writing easily lends itself to the screen but adding a Muppet twist makes it accessible and less dark. Michael Caine plays a fantastically disgruntled Scrooge and Gonzo is the perfect Dickens.

Where to stream it: Disney+



In "Rare Exports," a Finnish town, including this father and son, must face the consequences of waking a frozen Santa who was not ready for Christmas. PHOTO COURTESY OF KINOLOGY PRODUCTIONS

Anna Husted has a master's in film studies from New York University. In Big Sky she can be found skiing or at the movies at Lone Peak Cinema. When not gazing at the silver screen or watching her new favorite TV show, she's reading, fishing or rough-housing with her cat, Indiana Jones.

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'I'm on Your Side' – The Shivers



BY PETER BOSWORTH

The Shivers, a New York based folk-rock band, quietly released their debut LP “Charades” in 2004, and in an era defined by garage-rock revival, The Shivers’ release zigged where Billboard leaders like the Libertines and the Strokes zagged. Those bands documented frivolous love affairs, disappointing parties, and urban malaise with a scuzzy lo-fi sound—The Shivers, on the other hand, were making intimate acoustic ballads about romance and heartbreak.

They’ve never cared about being cool, only being honest.

Naturally, their hushed tunes never amounted to the commercial success that other contemporary bands achieved, but they did land the group a cult following. Celebrities like Patricia Arquette and Daniel Radcliffe are die-hard fans; Aaron Paul, famous for his role as Jesse Pinkman in *Breaking Bad*, even recruited the band to play their popular track “Beauty” at his wedding.

So much of the rock ‘n’ roll aesthetic is centered on maintaining a devil-may-care indifference. Frankly, The Shivers could not stray farther from that credo, led by singer and frontman Keith Zarreillo’s practically compulsive obsession with sentimentality—and with an eerily erotic voice to match.

Jim Harrison, author of the epic “Legends of the Fall” once said, “the [artist] who refuses sentiment refuses the full spectrum of human behav-



A sense of sentimentalism can be perceived even from the album cover. COURTESY OF THE SHIVERS

ior, and then he just dries up. ... I would rather give full vent to all human loves and disappointments, and take a chance on being corny, than die a smartass.”

With their newest record, “I’m on Your Side,” The Shivers risk being corny, but with great success. Over eight tracks, Zarreillo acts as a cartographer of love: mapping the peaks of passion, and the valleys of heartbreak.

Take the album’s very first track, “Capricorn and Cancer”; with whispered lyrics “Capricorn and Cancer, blue sky turning grey, once you were my dancer, you were dancing round my head.” For the astrologically ignorant, Capricorn and Cancer are opposing astronomical signs known for passionate love affairs, so when

the track’s soft guitar is juxtaposed with the gritty guitar solo, it’s in homage to the phenomenon. And despite that The Shivers’ lyrics walk a tight line that teeters on cliché, it’s their clever instrumentation that demonstrates an attractive talent.

The Shivers are truly at their best when they slow down and lean into their sentimentality. While The Shivers have made their fair share of slow-burners, “I’m on Your Side” is easily the most unabashedly melancholic record in the band’s catalog. It may not be the coolest rock record you’ll hear this year, but it certainly is among the most genuine.



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Big Sky Christmas Stroll 2019

The 22nd annual Christmas Stroll played out over two nights Dec. 14 and 15 in Big Sky Meadow Village and Town Center. Crowds rallied to both events to see Santa, ride in horse-drawn carriages, support local businesses and take in fireworks. Here are some photo highlights from EBS staffer Kirby Grubaugh.



Revelers massed for a few pints at Beehive Basin Brewery during the second night of the 22nd annual Big Sky Christmas Stroll. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH



Horse-drawn sleigh rides are practically mandatory during a Big Sky Christmas Stroll. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH



The Dickens Carolers traveled from business-to-business in the Meadow Village Center on Friday, Dec. 13, serenading onlookers with merry songs of old. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH



Big Sky Town Center was alive with attendees on Saturday, Dec. 14. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH



Christmas Strollers gathered around a bonfire in Big Sky's Fire Pit Park, drinking, dancing and being merry. PHOTO BY KIRBY GRUBAUGH

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BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY, DEC. 20 – JAN. 2

If your event falls between Jan. 3 and Jan. 16, please submit it by Dec. 25 by emailing media@outlaw.partners



FRIDAY, DEC. 20

Educator Appreciation Weekend
Big Sky Resort, 9 a.m.
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

Live Performance: Aoide Chamber Singers
Big Sky Chapel, 7:30 p.m.

Trivia Night
Lone Peak Cinema, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 21

Sweat and Serve Saturday
Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.
Learn more at movingmountainsmt.com

Educator Appreciation Weekend
Big Sky Resort, 9 a.m.
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

Skate with Santa
Big Sky Ice Rink, 4:30 p.m.

Winter Soulstice Party
Big Sky Resort, Various Locations and Times
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

SUNDAY, DEC. 22

Educator Appreciation Weekend
Big Sky Resort, 9 a.m.
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

TUESDAY, DEC. 24

Christmas Eve Services at The Big Sky Chapel
Big Sky Chapel, Various Times
Learn more at bigskychapel.com



The Torchlight Parade at Big Sky Resort never ceases to dazzle on Christmas Eve. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY RESORT



Santa will be making pit stops at Big Sky Resort and the Big Sky Ice Rink, putting his worldwide venture on hold for the children of Big Sky. PHOTO BY MIKE ARNEY

Live Music: Dan Dubuque
Scissorbills Saloon, 3 p.m.

Santa Visits
Huntley Lodge, Big Sky Resort, Various Times
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

Christmas Eve Dinner
The Huntley Dining Room, Big Sky Resort, Various Times
Book now at bigskyresort.com

Christmas Eve Services at Big Sky Resort
Yellowstone Conference Center, Big Sky Resort, Various Times
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

Torchlight Parade
Big Sky Resort
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25

Christmas Day Services at The Big Sky Chapel
Big Sky Chapel, Various Times
Learn more at bigskychapel.com

THURSDAY, DEC. 26

Live Music: Dan Dubuque
Moonlight Basin, 5 p.m.

Adult Pick Up Hockey
Big Sky Ice Rink, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, DEC. 27

Live Music: Little Jane and the Pistol Whips
Gallatin Riverhouse Grill, 6:30 p.m.

BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY, DEC. 20 – JAN. 2

If your event falls between Jan. 3 and Jan. 16, please submit it by Dec. 25 by emailing media@outlaw.partners



Trivia Night
Lone Peak Cinema, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 28

Sweat and Serve Saturday
Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.
Learn more at movingmountainsmt.com

Kid's Holiday Après
Yellowstone Conference Center Missouri Ballroom, Big Sky Resort, 4:30 p.m.
Reserve your spot at bigskyresort.com

SUNDAY, DEC. 29

Kid's Holiday Après
Yellowstone Conference Center Missouri Ballroom, Big Sky Resort, 4:30 p.m.
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MONDAY, DEC. 30

Kid's Holiday Après
Yellowstone Conference Center Missouri Ballroom, Big Sky Resort, 4:30 p.m.
Reserve your spot at bigskyresort.com

TUESDAY, DEC. 31

New Year's Eve Kid's Après
Yellowstone Conference Center Missouri Ballroom, Big Sky Resort, 6 p.m.
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New Year's Eve Dinner
The Huntley Dining Room, Big Sky Resort, Various Times
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Fireworks of all colors, patterns and sizes will light the sky and slopes of Big Sky Resort on New Year's Eve. PHOTO BY ROVEN IMAGES

WORTH THE DRIVE



LIVE MUSIC: 20/20 BACK TO THE FUTURE NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH LEFT ON TENTH

The Rialto, Bozeman
Tuesday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2019—the last day of the 2010s. It's a day to reflect on what's transpired over 10 years, a time to consider personal triumphs and setbacks, growths and recessions, and how much one has transformed in a decade's worth of passing time. But don't let the day get too somber; make sure to carve out some time to party. This New Year's Eve, there will be few better ways to celebrate the new decade and "new you" than with the eccentric musical stylings of Bozeman's Left on Tenth, a 10-man funk rock band with a steadily growing roster of devotees in the area. Known for raucous performances that whip crowds into frenzies, Left on Tenth is sure to usher in the 2020s with style, leaving anyone that attends Logjam Present's "20/20 Back to The Future New Year's Eve with Left on Tenth" at The Rialto with great memories to round out an era—all accomplished in throwback 80s threads.

Visit logjampresents.com for more information.

New Year's Eve Fireworks
Mountain Village Plaza, Big Sky Resort, Various Times
Learn more at bigskyresort.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 2

Adult Pick Up Hockey
Big Sky Ice Rink, 7:30 p.m.

Have you sometimes wished you could spend a holiday sober? Alcoholics Anonymous can help!
Call (888) 607-2000 to talk to a member of A.A., or go to aa-montana.org for meeting times and locations.



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8 CLAIM JUMPER ROAD | \$2,450,000

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135 SUMMIT VIEW DRIVE | \$450,000

Enjoy the majestic views from this 3.85 +/- acre property in the exclusive Summit View community. Perched on a knoll at the top of this gated neighborhood, this property offers panoramic views, large old-growth trees, and the privacy you've been looking for in a Big Sky homesite. Located across the street from the entrance to Big Sky Resort's Mountain Village, a convenient location is yet another perk of this gorgeous site! // **SANDY REVISKY | 406.539.6316**



120 FIRELIGHT DRIVE, UNIT C-1 | \$360,000

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Gorgeous, hard to find 2.962 +/- acre parcel located in the Stony Creek Subdivision. Old growth trees, abundant wildlife, and live water flows through this unbelievable property offering privacy and seclusion with unobstructed views. Centrally located with proximity to all Meadow amenities as well as the Big Sky Resort and all Mountain activities. Borders groomed cross-country ski and mountain biking trails. // **JACKIE MILLER | 406.539.5003**



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Big Sky Country Brew: 3-7-77 Kölsch

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – Once the capital city of the Montana Territory, Virginia City was, for a time, plagued by the constant raids by gangs of criminal frontiersmen. In response, the Montana Vigilantes were formed, using the numbers 3-7-77—the dimensions for a standard grave of 3 feet by 7 feet by 77 inches—as both an informal symbol and as a deterrent for criminals; the vigilantes would paint the numbers on a tent, house or cabin, threatening delinquents of the West with the wrath of the vigilantes should they not leave at once.

Today, the number appears on the crest of the Montana Highway Patrol. The organization claims to be unaware of the original meaning, but according to their website, “Regardless of its meaning, however, 3-7-77 is emblematic of the first organized law enforcement in Montana. The Montana Highway Patrol, in adopting this early symbol, honors the first men in the Montana Territory who organized for the safety and welfare of the people. For that same reason, the Association of Montana Troopers has carried on that tradition by placing the legendary 3-7-77 on their patch as well.”

Hailing from the Ruby Valley, brewed by the appropriately named Ruby Valley Brew, the 3-7-77 Kölsch carries that legacy in a delicious 4.8 percent ABV with a 24 IBU rating. Kölsch first originated in Germany and is a warm fermented beer that is conditioned at a cold temperature, yielding a pale, hoppy and bright brew.

The 3-7-77 is light and crisp, bursting with flavor. Pints are available at Lone Mountain Ranch’s Horn and Cattle Saloon.



Grab a 3-7-77 at Lone Mountain Ranch’s Horn and Cattle Saloon for a great drink paired with beautiful alpine views. PHOTO BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

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BIG SKY BITES

Nana Lucia's Christmas Cookies

BY BELLA BUTLER

Roughly 100 years ago, my great grandmother stepped off of a boat on Ellis Island as an eight-year-old Italian immigrant. Despite leaving most everything behind, she brought with her one thing—the distinguishable culinary culture of her home country.

Growing up with her, I recall every meal as an extravagant production. Each ingredient was sourced from a particular and unique location; shopping alone was a few days' work.

In the face of her impenetrable gastronomic ethics, one recipe broke tradition: A popular treat of the mid-twentieth century, chocolate chip peanut butter cookies baked with cake mix were not Italian and not traditional, but their spongy texture and rich flavor assuaged Nana's discriminating palette.

This holiday season scrap the trendy, yet laborious, Pinterest recipes that tend to work tears of unmet expectations into the dough. Instead, opt for a simple recipe that is sure to please even the most critical of tongues.

Recipe:

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 12 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup softened butter
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 (insert # ounces) box yellow cake mix
- 12 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon vanilla



Peanut butter and cake mix come together to create a moist texture and decadent flavor in this twist on a time-tested favorite. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

Instructions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees and grease baking sheet with a layer of butter
2. In a large bowl, beat eggs, water, butter, peanut butter and half of the cake mix until smooth
3. Add in vanilla
4. Incrementally add the remainder of the cake mix and chocolate chips until all ingredients are completely combined, avoiding mix too thoroughly
5. Portion into two-inch dough mounds and spread evenly onto sheet
6. Bake for 10-12 minutes
7. Remove, allowing to cool
8. Enjoy

Chef's Tip: Don't roll or overwork the dough—an uneven texture is the mark of a homemade cookie. Leave out for Santa on Dec. 24.

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AMUSE-BOUCHE

Amuse-bouche refers to an appetizer, and by French translation means, “to entertain the mouth.” It offers a glimpse into what you should expect from a meal. Also it’s free, compliments of the chef.

People aren’t always who they seem



BY SCOTT MECHURA
EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

Ah, the American frontier—be it the Wild West, Appalachia, or deep in the heart of Texas—we seem to fall in love with this idea of what we hope American history was, not what it really was. We often create a utopian view of history, and I’m not sure why we do that.

Somewhere, there is a balance in America between what we hear in grade school and what we later learn to be true, historical fact. Time and time again, we see historical figures who have captured our hearts. They may be war heroes or political leaders—maybe men or women who have stood the test of time—such as Abraham Lincoln or Eleanor Roosevelt.

I was reminded of one such figure this holiday season when I was cooking with a fruit that gets pretty heavy mileage throughout the holidays: the apple. We were talking about all the wonderful things we can create during the holiday season with apples. This time of year, apples find their way into all the baking, feasting and imbibing that takes place during the holidays. But it was the imbibing that caught my attention.

You’re thinking right now that apples aren’t necessarily high on your holiday list. And I get it. But apples are so versatile. From apple pie to warm, toasty turnovers, apples warm our insides. They are also the key ingredient in fermented cider.

Known as a “nurseryman,” John Chapman was born in Leominster, Massachusetts on September 26, 1774. But you may know him by another name: Johnny Appleseed. And he was also a bit of an oxymoron.

People often spoke of a man floating down the river on a sunny afternoon in a makeshift log floatation device we may now refer to as a catamaran. Johnny was a kind, gentle, happy-go-lucky fellow, who was most often seen with a tattered shirt and pants that were torn above the ankles. He very seldom wore shoes and carried a knapsack that had just the things he needed.

He was known to meet strangers in his travels and divert what vague plans he may have had and simply endear himself to their hospitality for days on end. It was also said that Johnny Appleseed was always cheerful because he was usually intoxicated on fermented cider.

He was also a savvy businessman. Taking advantage of a deal set forth by the Ohio Company of Associates in 1792, wherein anyone settling the Western frontier (at that time anything past western Pennsylvania), could homestead 100 acres for their own—with one condition—that they plant 50 apple trees and 20 peach trees within the first three years of settling.

Now what if there was someone who did all of the initial hard work of planting these trees so as to charge a fee to new settlers for doing the work for them? That’s where Johnny came in.

Johnny planted apples all over the Ohio River Valley. Yet there is virtually no mention of him ever planting a single peach tree. And the reason there wasn’t a Johnny Peachpit was that peaches did not make a great cider the way apples do.

Perhaps the easiest way to view the history of the apple in American history is this: As author Michael Pollan wrote, “Up until Prohibition, an apple grown in America was far less likely to be eaten than to wind up in a barrel of cider.”

Scott Mechura has spent a life in the hospitality industry. He is a former certified beer judge and currently the Executive Chef at Buck’s T-4 Lodge in Big Sky.

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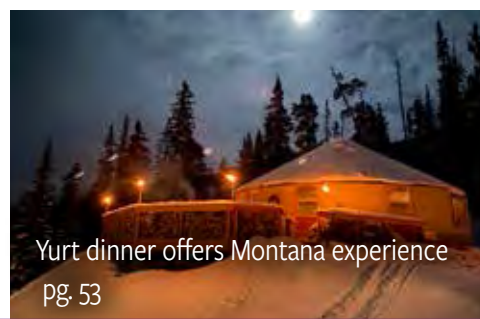
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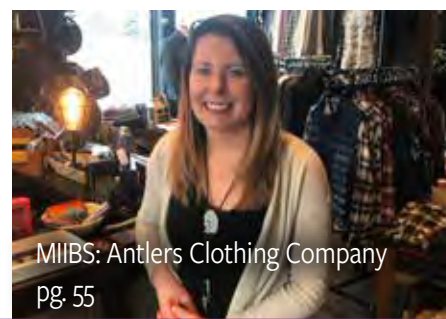
SECTION 4:
SPORTS, BUSINESS,
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Lady Big Horns remain unbeaten
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THE LONE PEAK PLAYBOOK



Wildcats claw past Big Horns

BY BRANDON WALKER
EBS EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

ABSAROKEE – The Lone Peak Big Horns varsity boys basketball team squared off against the Harrison-Willow Creek Wildcats on Dec. 14 in Absarokee. The Wildcats got the best of the Big Horns, winning 59-24.

Coming off a tough loss on opening night to Absarokee, LPHS fought hard, but had struggled finding the bottom of the net on the offensive end of the floor. Senior Frankie Starz led all scorers with 14 points, but it wasn't enough to overcome the all-around strong shooting from Harrison-Willow Creek.

Big Horn head coach John Hannahs admitted that it was just 'one of those days' for his team. "We didn't really execute our offense all that effectively," he said. "We would fall out of our offense just a little too quickly, [and] we weren't quite patient enough."

Lone Peak hung tough in the first quarter, only trailing by 6 points at the intermission. But a total of 4 points in the second and third quarters combined was the Big Horns' unraveling, as the Wildcats put up 25 points in that stretch, to take a 27-point edge into the fourth. "It's always tough to be down like that and just trying to find a way to get the ball in the hoop. It can get really frustrating, but they held their own really well," Hannahs said.

LPHS (0-2) will have a chance to bounce back against the White Sulphur Springs Hornets at the Bough-Dolan Athletic Complex on Dec. 19. "We never quit. There was no loss of heart for the game. They played hard right up until the end. There's something to be said for that," Hannahs said. "At the end of the day we have this vision of this team who we want to be, and we see it in practice, and we're just trying to transfer that to the game. We're still finding out a little bit of who we are."



Lone Peak senior Frankie Starz (center) drives the lane against Absarokee defender Tucker Sullivan (34) on Dec. 7. The Big Horns came up short, falling to the Huskies 57-38. PHOTO BY BRANDON WALKER

Box Score

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	Total
Harrison-Willow Creek	17	14	11	17	59
Lone Peak	11	4	0	9	24

Lone Peak: Frankie Starz 14, Mikey Botha 3, Nick Brester 2, Bennet Miller 2, Austin Samuels 2, Isaac Gilmore 1

Harrison-Willow Creek: Luke Cima 13, Joe Cima 10, Cristian Contreras 8, Vern Homner 7, Jackson Nye 6, Sage Buus 6, Kyle Homner 5, Rhett Donnelly 4



LEADING LONE PEAK

Frankie Starz

Captain Frankie Starz was a key contributor for the Lone Peak Big Horns in the first two games of the season. Compiling a total of 24 points, including a team-high 14 versus Harrison-Willow Creek on Dec. 14, Starz has made an impact on both sides of the ball in the early going. Big Horns head coach John Hannahs applauded his senior point guard on his efforts so far. "He's been kind of the constant the last couple weeks. He's kept a level head, he's slowed things down, he's pushed the pace when we've needed to push the pace," said Hannahs. "He didn't really make any mistakes, he was just solid, and he was our high scorer on Saturday."

Big Horn senior captain Frankie Starz has led the LPHS squad early on this season. Lone Peak is looking to bounce back after a couple of tough games to begin the year. Starz and the Big Horns will clash with White Sulphur Springs in their next game on Dec. 19. PHOTO BY BRANDON WALKER



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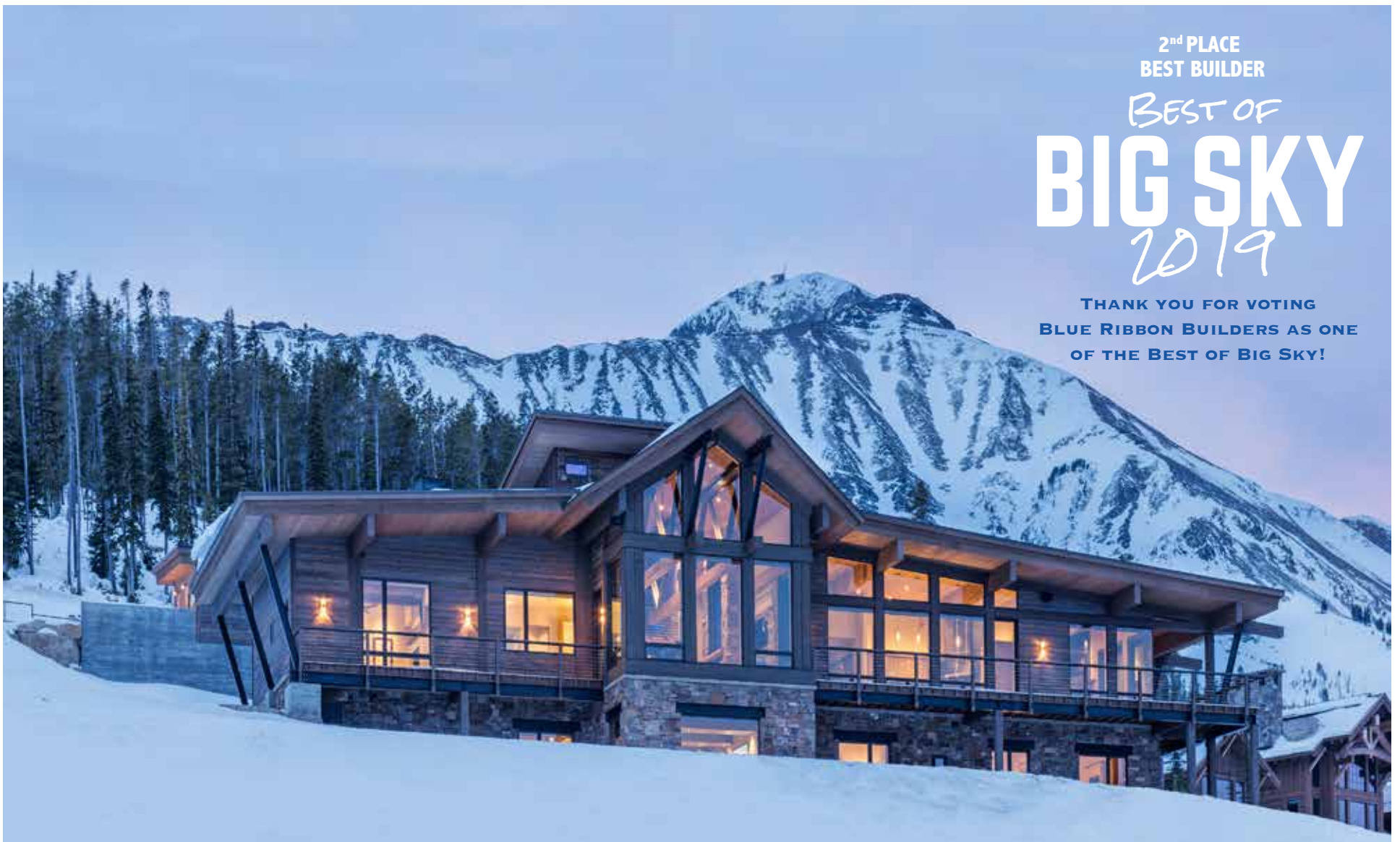
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THE LONE PEAK PLAYBOOK



Lady Big Horns best Wildcats, remain unbeaten

BY BRANDON WALKER
EBS EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

ABSAROOKEE – The Lone Peak High School varsity girls basketball team entered their matchup with the Harrison-Willow Creek Wildcats on Dec. 14 riding the momentum from their exciting opening night victory over the Absarokee Huskies. The young Lady Big Horns squad was able to come away with another win, besting the Wildcats 36-26.

Lone Peak head coach Loren Bough was impressed with the balance of his teams play throughout the winning effort. “The girls distributed the ball well. Our previous game was much more layup focused. This time we had a good balance between layups and 3-pointers,” Bough said.

The Lady Big Horns jumped out to a 4-point lead in the first quarter, but Harrison-Willow Creek narrowed the gap to just one bucket at the half. After a slow third quarter for both teams, with neither one gaining an advantage, the stage was set for the final eight minutes of play.

With Lone Peak leading 22-20 entering the fourth, LPHS freshman Jessie Bough stepped up and led a 14-point effort from the Lady Big Horns in the fourth quarter. The young point guard chipped in 7 of her team-high 11 points in the quarter to help LPHS seal the victory. “The girls are proving to themselves that they’re winners and that sets the tone for the rest of the season, even as the competition is likely to increase,” said coach Bough.

Lone Peak also got solid contributions from freshman Maddie Cone, who had 9 points, and junior Ivy Hicks, who contributed 7. The Lady Big Horns (2-0) will look to remain undefeated when they take on



LPHS junior Sara Wilson (4) looks for a shot against an Absarokee defender. Big Horn freshman Maddie Cone (31) looks on. Lone Peak defeated Absarokee 47-41 on Dec. 7. PHOTO BY BRANDON WALKER

White Sulphur Springs Hornets on Dec. 19 at the friendly confines of the Bough-Dolan Athletic Complex.

Box Score

	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	Total
Harrison-Willow Creek	4	14	2	6	26
Lone Peak	8	12	2	14	36

Lone Peak: Jessie Bough 11, Maddie Cone 9, Ivy Hicks 7, Kate King 4, Carly Wilson 3, Sara Wilson 2

Harrison-Willow Creek: Dana Lerum 13, Payton Mallett 6, Lauren Cima 5, Rosie Chater 2



LEADING LONE PEAK

Sara Wilson

Junior Sara Wilson has been a lockdown defender in the early goings for the Lone Peak Lady Big Horns. Tasked with guarding Harrison-Willow Creek’s best player on Dec. 14, Wilson was able to limit the offensive output of her adversary, helping LPHS improve to 2-0 on the season. Coach Loren Bough was full of praise for Wilson and how instrumental she has been to getting off the season on the right foot. “Sara Wilson was chosen for her outstanding defensive effort against Harrison-Willow Creek. She held their star player, who previously scored seven 3-pointers in the previous game, to just three buckets and no 3-pointers,” said Bough. “We had a cold shooting night and that really led the way to victory.”

Junior Sara Wilson has been instrumental in the Lady Big Horns strong start to the season. Her gritty work on the defensive end of the floor has helped LPHS come away with a 2-0 record to being the year. The Lady Big Horns will look to pick up another victory when they take on White Sulphur Springs on Dec. 19. PHOTO COURTESY OF JILL BOUGH

Big Sky skating rink season begins

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – The time has come to dust off the skates and hit the ice. The outdoor rink at Town Center, which has become a winter staple in Big Sky, opened its gates Thanksgiving Day, kicking off yet another season of sport, play and community gathering.

The Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association will present a menu of activity options, including kid’s hockey clinics, a 3-on-3 hockey league, a curling league, hockey camps and a drop-in curling clinic taught by the Bozeman Curling Club.

The BSSHA will also host the 10th annual Pavelich Invitational game, where local hockey athletes will compete in honor of Big Sky local and former Detroit Red Wings left winger Marty Pavelich, who also serves on the BSSHA board.

Jeff Trulen, BSSHA board member, said the association will focus on continuing and expanding programs and efforts already in place at the rink. “The goal is to accommodate everyone in a growing community,” Trulen said.



Young skaters practice their hockey stops on the ice rink in Town Center during hockey practice. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

In addition to swelling crowds on the ice, many of BSSHA’s programs are showing increased numbers of participants. The 3-on-3 hockey league, a local favorite, will field nearly double the number of teams than it did last year. The curling league, which is set up similarly to summer softball with an end-of-season tournament, has 24 teams signed up in its third year.

Last season, the rink was upgraded with a new chilling system thanks to grassroots funding and a matching \$195,000 grant from the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board. The chilling system allows for more consistent ice of a higher quality throughout fluctuating weather patterns, but it brings challenges of its own in its experimental early stages of use.

“Keeping and maintaining ice in an outside atmosphere is hard,” Trulen said. “Nobody does it anymore. We’re a unicorn.” Being an anomaly has its perks, too. Outdoor space allows for ample room for spectating, and there is nothing quite like skating under falling snow with Lone Mountain as a backdrop.

For those not sporting their own gear, skates can be rented near the rink at either East Slope Outdoors or Grizzly Outfitters.

RINK SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

12pm - 6pm Open Skate
6 - 9:30pm Broomball League 1/3-2/28

MONDAYS

12pm - 5pm Open Skate
5:30 - 7pm Kids Hockey 12/3-2/27
7pm - 11pm Open Skate

TUESDAYS

12pm - 5:30pm Open Skate
6- 9pm 3 on 3 Hockey 12/3-2/18
9pm - 11pm Open Skate

WEDNESDAYS

12pm - 5pm Open Skate
5:30 - 6:30pm Kids Hockey 12/2-2/12
7pm - 11pm Open Skate

THURSDAYS

12 - 5pm Open Skate
5:30 - 7pm Kids Hockey 12/3-2/27
7 - 11pm Open Skate

FRIDAYS

12 - 5pm Open Skate
5:30 - 11pm Curling League 1/3-2/28

SATURDAYS

12 - 11pm Open Skate

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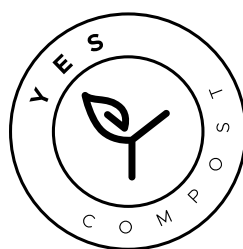
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Yurt dinner offers quintessentially Montana experience

BY DOUG HARE

BIG SKY – Montana Backcountry Adventures began in 1997 as a snowcat skiing operation on the slopes of Moonlight Basin. In 2000, the previous owner purchased a 30-foot yurt and began the “Moonlight Dinners” enterprise, offering snowcat-accessed dining. When the Lone Tree lift was installed in 2004 on MBA’s ski terrain, the snowcat ski business was put on hold and the yurt moved to its current location on Big Sky Resort property in 2005.

Kevin Daily, along with two partners, purchased Moonlight Dinners in 2007, and in 2008 they opened the Bell Lake Yurt backcountry ski hut in the Tobacco Root Range, offering guided skiing, avalanche courses and overnight yurt rentals. In 2011, Kevin’s wife Jodi bought out his partners. They sold the Bell Lake Yurt in 2013, allowing the couple to concentrate on their Big Sky operations.

Montana Backcountry Adventures now runs two yurt restaurants: the Shedhorn Grill—which opened in 2009—offers on-slope lunches and refreshments beneath the Shedhorn Chairlift on the south face of Lone Mountain, a popular destination for skiers looking for a break after skiing off the peak, and the Montana Dinner Yurt, which offers an intimate and unique BYOB backcountry dining experience nestled in the woods on the flanks of Lone Mountain.

This summer and fall, the Montana Dinner Yurt was completely renovated and refurbished. “We’re still using the exact same site, but it has been regraded and expanded. The yurt road has been graded and resurfaced,” said Kevin Daily of the recent improvements. “The sledding hill has been mellowed out. Landscaping, rock work, and seeding to the site will also improve our plans for a summer dining project as well.”

The yurt platform now boasts a new 2,000-square-foot deck surrounded by firewood with a new 35’ Shelter Designs “Big Sky Yurt” with 1,008 square feet inside, upgraded Arctic Insulation, an insulated floor, four hard opening windows, two front doors, two fabric windows and a dome opener for ventilation. The old kitchen tent has been replaced with a single pitch outbuilding.

According to Daily, the seating capacity of 44 people and menu will remain unchanged from years past. But the renovations and new accommodations make for an even warmer and cozier candlelit dinner yurt featuring a savory meal in a casually elegant atmosphere.

Patrons of the Montana Dinner Yurt are bound to have a quintessentially Montana experience. The adventure begins at the meeting



Montana Backcountry Adventures new yurt and refurbished deck shimmers under the light of a waxing gibbous moon and surrounding tiki torches.



One of two Pisten Bully passenger snowcats that ferries patrons of the Montana Dinner Yurt on a soothing 15-minute ride to and from their unique dining experience. PHOTOS BY MICHELLE CLARK-CONLEY

area upstairs in the Snowcrest Building at Big Sky Resort’s Mountain Village. After checking in by 6:30 p.m., guests board Rosie and Ginger, two Pisten Bully passenger snowcats at 7 p.m. sharp, for a jovial fifteen-minute ride through the serene forest to a private backcountry location. Guests who bundle up can choose to sit up on top of the snowcats to enjoy the sights and sounds of the mountains at night.

Upon arrival to the yurt, a torch-lit sledding run and campfire lights illuminates the new yurt in all her glory, while inside candles flicker and the wood stove crackles, keeping the yurt toasty warm. Long tables covered with linens and candles give the opportunity to meet other guests, while local, talented musicians like Pete Manka play acoustic guitar. There is rarely a shortage of laughter and applause throughout the evening.

When the dinner bell rings, an exquisite dinner is served in courses, starting with hearty baked French onion soup and warm bread, followed by a tender filet mignon with peppercorn sauce or fresh-caught salmon, garlic mashed potatoes, and fresh sautéed veggies, and finishes with warm Toblerone chocolate fondue with fruit and pound cake for dessert.

The accommodating staff and relaxed atmosphere of the Montana Dinner Yurt experience allow guests time for sledding, stargazing, and socializing by the fire, with the dinner usually lasting around three hours, giving ample time for some outdoor recreation and a chance to make friends with strangers. A merry return ride back to the Summit Hotel ends the evening around 10 p.m with attendees leaving with full bellies, still smiling from nighttime culinary excursion.

Prices are \$145 for adults and \$115 for children.

For more information, visit bigskyyurt.com.

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Making it in Big Sky: Antlers Clothing Company

Q & A with Kelly Piccardo

EBS STAFF

Kelly Piccardo remembers visiting Big Sky during the summers with her family, whitewater rafting trips, and excursions to Yellowstone National Park. She credits those fond childhood memories for what eventually drew her to Montana full time. “I was probably ten years old and unaware that this was even a ski town,” she said with a laugh. The Tulsa, Oklahoma native attended Southern Methodist University near Dallas, Texas concentrating in early childhood education, English literature, and photography—a triple threat—as she calls it.

Piccardo was reluctant at first to sit down for an interview because she says that she doesn’t feel like she’s ‘made it’ quite yet, especially considering that she opened the Antlers Clothing Company less than two years ago. That attitude combined with her entrepreneurial spirit and knack for stocking her store with unique, timeless styles will almost guarantee that she will indeed ‘make it’ in this town.

When Explore Big Sky did eventually meet up with Piccardo in her modern haberdashery tucked in the heart of Town Center across from The Rocks Tasting Room, she offered candid answers about running a business, handling the seasonality of Big Sky, and her philosophy of retail while Grateful Dead jams played faintly in the impeccably manicured storefront.

Explore Big Sky: *You moved here about a decade ago from Dallas. What initially drew you to live in a ski town in Montana?*

Kelly Piccardo: My dad had lived in Big Sky. I missed him and loved visiting him. I was just done with the city life and wanted a change of pace. What I thought would be one summer turned into a decade. Big Sky is like that—it just sucks you in and you never want to leave.

EBS: *Can you tell me more about your employment history since moving here?*

K.P.: When I first moved here I worked at Morningstar [Learning Center] as a teacher, then I went to Grizzly [Outfitters] and then I started Antlers [Clothing Company] in July of 2018.

EBS: *You come from a family of entrepreneurs. Can you tell me how your parents have influenced your perspective on operating a small business?*

K.P.: It goes back even further than my parents. My grandparents, all four of them, were entrepreneurs and it was instilled in me from a very young age that if you want something you need to work extremely hard for it. They told me that the work day doesn’t end when you turn off the open sign. You’re always thinking about your small business and working towards your goals. It’s the hardest job you’ll ever have but it’s the most rewarding one—to work for yourself.

EBS: *Tell me a little bit about your philosophy of retail. For starters, how did you go about finding which brands to put in your store?*

K.P.: Retail should be fun. It should always be evolving and changing because fashion trends change and you need to keep it interesting. If you carry the same stuff year-round, people aren’t going to come back. For choosing my brands, I thought about who my customers were going to be, what kind of money they would be willing to spend, having different price points because Big Sky has a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds so you need to a little bit of everything for everyone.



Kelly Piccardo opened up Antlers Clothing Company 18 months ago with an entrepreneurial mindset, a good fashion sense, and a drive to continually improve her modern haberdashery. PHOTO BY DOUG HARE

EBS: *What is something that you wish you had known before starting your own company in Big Sky—something you’ve learned in the last year and a half?*

K.P.: How many people would ask, “Where is the women’s section?” It’s kind of funny. We’re a men’s store. That’s been my concept from day one. However, I learned over the first 18 months of being open that I need to have other things besides men’s clothing and footwear to get those women customers to come in. So I’ve picked up things like candles, socks, koozies, Stetson hats and, to me, things that are unisex and get women customers in the door as well. And I do sell a lot of clothes to women, which is fun. I love that.

EBS: *What is the best business advice that you’ve received over the years?*

K.P.: Maintain consistency with hours even during the slow times. If your hours are 11-7, don’t close up shop at 6:30 p.m. even if you haven’t had anyone stop in in the last hour. It’s really, really hard to abide by but it’s so important. That one person might come by after you close and then never come back. It’s hard but it’s worth it.

EBS: *How does the seasonality of Big Sky impact your bottom line? How did you approach the ebbs and flows of sales?*

K.P.: I have my orders come in when people are here. I don’t place big orders coming in October or May because there just aren’t enough people here to shop it.

EBS: *What is the biggest obstacle that you face running a business in a Montana ski town?*

K.P.: This isn’t going to be a new one: the offseason. Retail is a rollercoaster in Big Sky. You have such a long shoulder season here and you might not see people for a while, but you have to make a list and do inventory and keep yourself busy.

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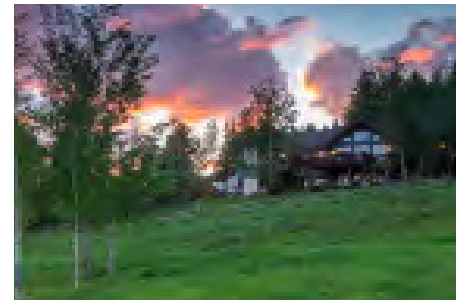


Royal Coachman Ranch
160 ACRES / \$5.9M



Lot 38 Bitterbrush Trail
1.27 ACRES / \$800K

BIG SKY



2005 Upper Chief Joseph
7,690 SQ FT / \$4.3M



64 Lodgepole
6,160 SQ FT / \$3.895M

BIG SKY - LAND



The Ranches at Yellow Mountain
2A-1B
526 Acres / \$5.8M



The Ranches at Yellow Mountain
Tract 3B-1
23 Acres / \$875k



The Ranches at Yellow Mountain
Tract 1A-1
21 Acres / \$795k



Big EZ
Lot 42: \$339K / 20 ACRES
Lot 43: \$375K / 20 ACRES
Combined: \$699K



Lot 2 Big EZ
20 ACRES

BIG SKY - LAND

BOZEMAN & GREATER MONTANA



COS 2071 Tract 1 Gallatin Road
3.14 Acres / \$299K



SxS Ranch
Bozeman, MT
483.78 ACRES / \$7.5M



Homestead at the Beacon
Butte, MT
640 Acres / \$1.65M



Rocking S7 Ranch Lot 4
Bozeman, MT
20.232 ACRES / \$650K

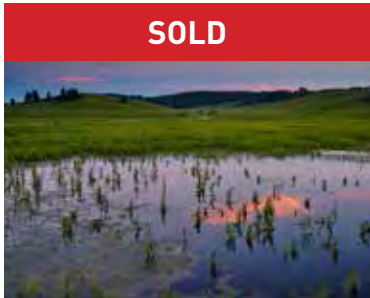


3197 Rose Street
Bozeman, MT
1,970 SQ FT / \$430K

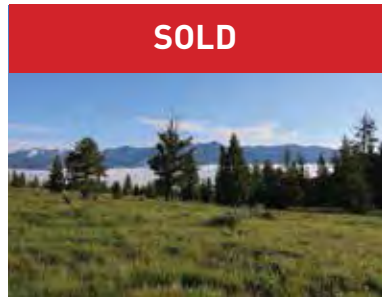


412 Ent
1,300

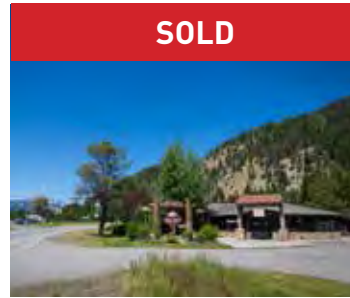
RECENTLY SOLD



Yellowstone Ranch Preserve
List Price: \$19M



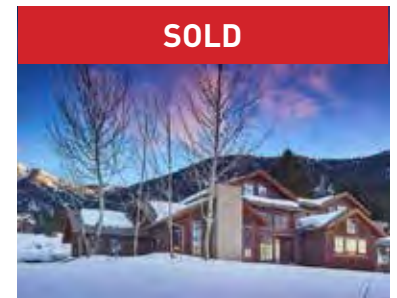
Mountain Meadows
120 Acres / \$3.495M



Big Sky Corner Property
List Price: \$3.24M

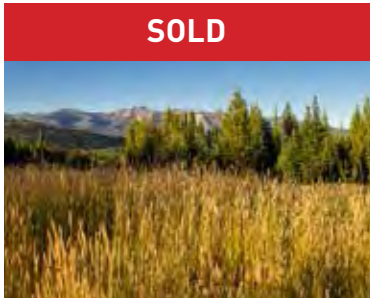


78 Meadow Village
Dr. Big Sky, MT
4,769 SQ FT / \$2.1M

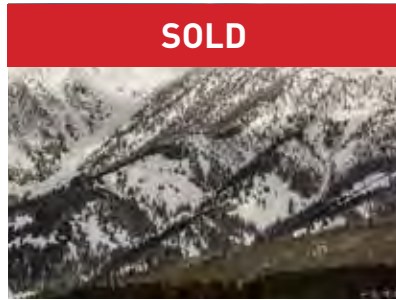


245 Rain in Face
3,446 SQ FT / \$1.695M

RECENTLY SOLD



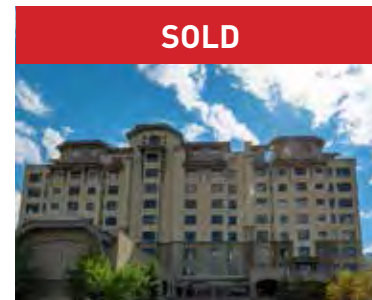
Lot 64 Goshawk
1.04 ACRES / \$775K



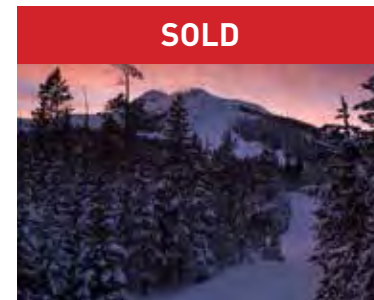
Lot 44 Diamond Hitch
1.25 ACRE / \$699K



Hidden Village
15 Blue Flax Place
2,788 SQ FT / \$599K



Summit 911/912
List Price: \$595K



Lot 39 Diamond Hitch
1 ACRE / \$595K

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30 Beehive Basin Rd.
6,203 SQ FT / \$2.9M



211 B Pheasant Tail
\$720K



Cottonwood Crossing Unit 5
1854 SQ FT / \$565K



Hill Condo 1321
440 SQ FT / \$185K



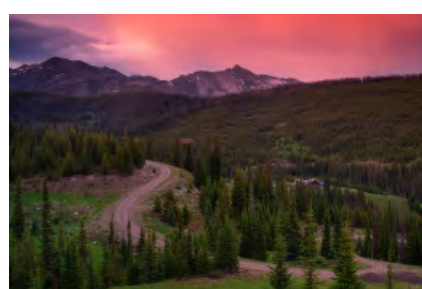
g Buck Road
ES / \$480K



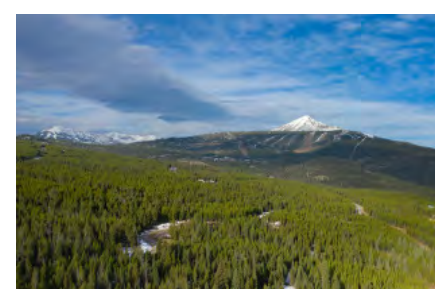
Lot 4 Beaver Creek
20 Acres / \$539K



Bear Paw Ponds Parcel 7
20.04 Acres / \$399K



Lot 3 Joy Road
6.83 Acres / \$395K



Lot 71 Morning Glory
3.65 Acres / \$375K

COMMERCIAL



erprise Blvd., Unit 30
Bozeman, MT
4 SQ FT / \$315K



Marketplace Unit 104
Big Sky, MT
1,204 SQ FT / \$560,920



Marketplace Unit 202
Big Sky, MT
966 SQ FT / \$389K



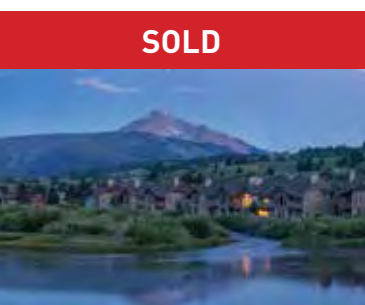
47220 Gallatin Rd. Unit #2
840 SQ FT / \$149K



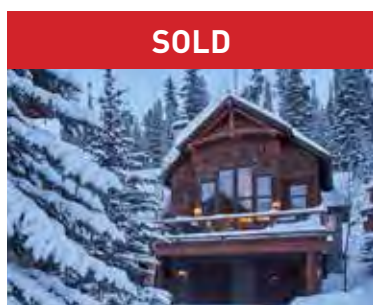
Airport Garages
Bozeman, MT
\$24.9K per unit
Taking reservations for
building G



Car Park Condo Unit E7
Bozeman, MT
23'x11'x10' / \$24K



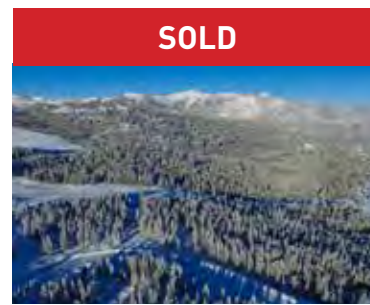
Crail Ranch Unit 40
List Price: \$1.35M



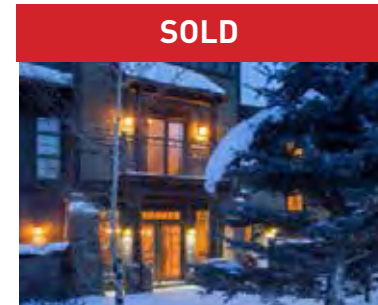
Black Eagle Lodge Unit 30
List Price: \$1.35M



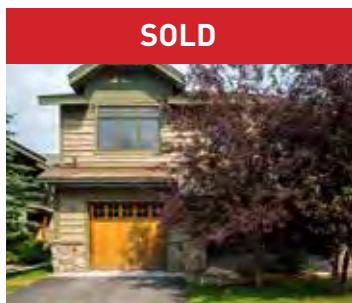
2078 Little Coyote List
List Price: \$1.079M



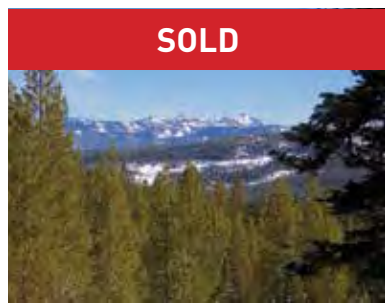
Ski Tip Lot 10
List Price: \$975K



81 Pheasant Tail Ln. Unit 2
2,707 SQ FT / \$839K



Cottonwood Crossing #15
1,854 SQ FT / \$539K



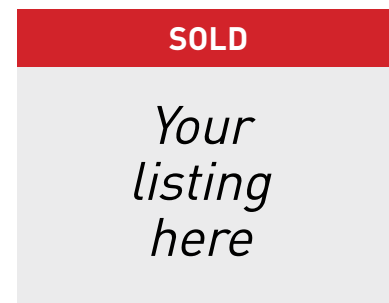
Lot 119 Old Barn Rd.
3.13 Acres / \$490K



3170 Winter Park #B
Bozeman, MT
1183 SQ FT / \$295K



Hill Condo 1316
770 SQ FT / \$280k



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412 Enterprise Blvd., Unit 30 | Bozeman, MT | \$315K
1,304 SQ FT

UNDER CONTRACT



3197 Rose Street | Bozeman, MT | \$430K
1,970 SQ FT



Rocking S7 Ranch Lot 4 | Bozeman, MT | \$650K
20.232 ACRES

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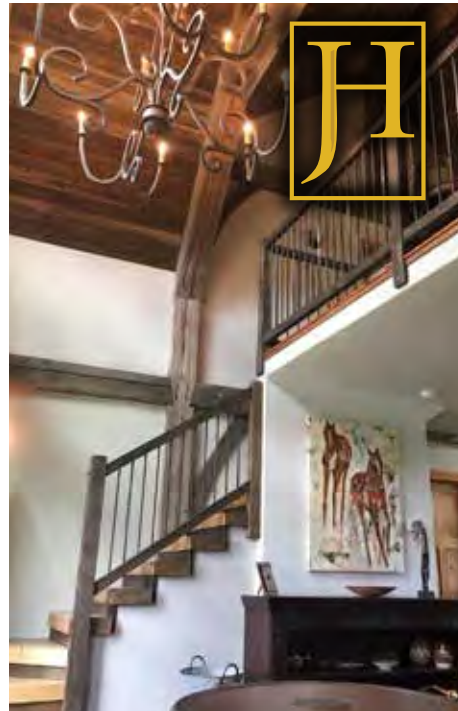
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Word from Big Sky Resort

Your guide to events, activities and news at Big Sky Resort

Big Sky Resort partners with apparel rental company

BY DOUG HARE

BIG SKY – With over 4,000 acres accessible for riding in mid-December, 17 aerial lifts and the tram open, there are plenty of runs to explore on Andesite and Lone mountains in the early ski season. It's hard not to enjoy a day on the slopes—unless you don't have the right gear for the mission.

Luckily, it just got a whole lot easier to equip the entire family for a ski trip to Big Sky. Many snow sports enthusiasts visiting Big Sky already rent their skis, boots and boards in order to save money and make traveling easier. Now guests to Big Sky Resort can further reduce costs and streamline travel by renting all the gear they need to wear on the slopes—pants, jackets, goggles, gloves and base layers—for only 10 percent of the cost of purchasing them.

Arrive Outdoors, Big Sky's exclusive apparel and accessory rental partner, offers dozens of premium brands on their website. Guests simply need to reserve the gear they want at least seven days in advance of their first day in Big Sky. The selections are then shipped directly to their lodging destinations, and the package includes a free return label and resort pick-up.

"We've seen an increasing need from some of our guests to be able to rent gear that will help them prepare for the Montana weather conditions," said Dylan Hall, vice president of Big Sky Resort Retail. "This new option provides that service, ultimately improving their skiing experience in Big Sky."

Arrive's customer service team is available to provide one-on-one support on brand recommendations, sizing and delivery to make outdoor experiences as personalized and seamless as possible—a helpful service for those who are infrequent or novice skiers.



Big Sky Resort recently partnered with Arrive Outdoors as an apparel and accessory rental partner to cut the costs and hassle of snow sports rentals for visitors to their accommodations. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY RESORT

"We're thrilled to partner with Big Sky Resort and help provide guests with a phenomenal end-to-end experience. With kids and adult sizes available, we're making it easier than ever to visit Big Sky—especially for those traveling from outside of the area," said Rachelle Snyder, CEO of Arrive.

In addition to their snow gear rental collection, Arrive will also offer premium camping and backpacking gear for Big Sky Resort guests in the summer.

For more information and booking, visit bigskyresort.com/arriveoutdoors

Headlamp night skiing returns to Andesite Mountain

Looking for a unique on-mountain adventure? Big Sky Resort's new night skiing experience is unlike anything else in North America. The exploit begins as the sun sets over Lone Mountain and continues into the night, as countless stars illuminate the vast Montana night sky.

Big Sky Resort's night skiing program started late last season and will be offered this winter on Wednesdays through Saturdays for two hour sessions. Guests will meet a private guide outside the Mountain Sports Office in the Snowcrest Building. From there, crews of up to seven people will then take Ramcharger 8, Big Sky's technologically advanced eight-seat chairlift with heated seats and a weather-proof bubble, to the top of Andesite Mountain.

Patrons will then be given 2,100-lumen Lupine Blika headlamps—as powerful as car headlights—to fasten on their helmets and which have a remote control that attaches to your ski pole. It is recommended that skiers have goggles with clear or yellow lenses to maximize their night vision.

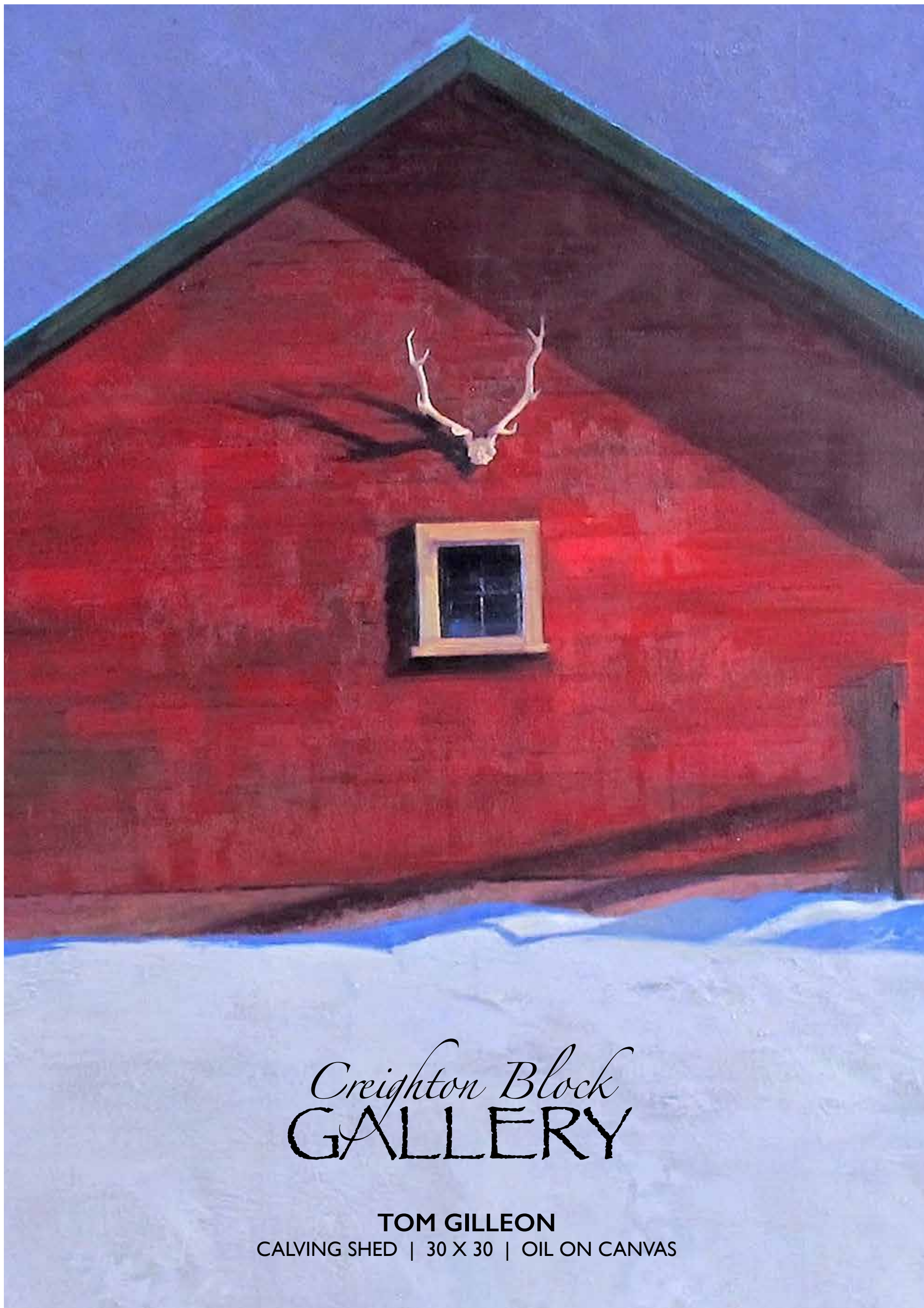
And that's just the beginning of the escapade. Experienced guides will escort your party all over Andesite Mountain. Riders will be free to explore the uniqueness of shredding in the dark accompanied only by wildlife and an occasional snow cat grooming runs for the following day.

The cost for one party is \$425 for the regular season and \$410 for the value periods. Regular season includes Dec. 22, 2019 - January 4, 2020, and Feb. 8 - March 31, 2020. Value season includes Nov. 28 - Dec. 21, 2019, Jan. 5 - Feb. 7, 2020 and April 1 - 4, 2020.

Headlamp night skiing is slated to run from 6-8 p.m. Dec. 16 through Feb. 15 and 7:30-9:30 p.m. from Feb. 16 until April 4. It is recommended that all skiers and snowboarders participating can ride at a level six, which means everyone in the party should be at an intermediate level—able to use a parallel stance on smooth blue runs and familiar with varied terrain and conditions.



Headlamp night skiing will be illuminating the slopes of Andesite Mountain this winter season on Wednesdays through Saturdays after the masses of day skiers have long gone home. PHOTO BY JEFF ENGERBRETSON



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Yours in Health

Crystals

Are they a trend or a source of healing?

BY DR. ANDREA WICK
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Crystals can be associated with “new age, hippie healing.” Many people are skeptical of the healing properties of crystals, and may believe they are just pretty rocks to look at. Let’s have a look inside the world of crystals and you can decide for yourself if you think they may actually help heal or be a hoax.

The healing properties of crystals have been used by the Chinese for thousands of years. According to “The Book of Stones: Who They Are and What They Teach,” by Robert Simmons and Naisha Ahsian, the Chinese view jade as “strengthening the body during life, and protect[ing] one after death.” The Chinese believe jade strengthens the “qi,” or energy within one’s body, when worn.

Quartz crystal is currently used in many technological devices to help hold vibrational frequencies. Quartz crystal can also generate electricity and energy. Do you know that quartz helps to keep the clocks in our watches and phones accurate? Quartz has the ability to vibrate at a specific frequency, which is why it is used in radios, televisions, phones and so on. Other forms of quartz include rose quartz, lemurian quartz, smoky quartz, citrine, amethyst and chalcedony.

Baltic amber, although used as a crystal, is actually a fossilized tree resin. Amber has properties known to relieve pain, especially with teething babies. Baltic amber has a chemical known as succinic acid. When succinic acid is absorbed into the skin it aids in pain relief. Teething necklaces are popular for babies and small children. I personally know many parents who claim it helps reduce pain symptoms in their child.

Shungite is a crystal that is believed to protect the physical body from electromagnetic stress. Electromagnetic stress is everywhere in our world. All electronics including our phones, cell phone towers, routers, smart meters as well as microwaves emit radiation. Although more research needs to be done, electromagnetic radiation may be related to malignant brain tumors. The “Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine” investigated the use of cell phones and the occurrence of brain tumors in rural and urban areas in 2005 and 2007. Using a cell phone for 10 years or more had an increased risk of brain tumors.

Shungite can be carried in your pocket, worn as jewelry and can be placed next to a computer or phone or around an internet router to decrease the amount of EMF stress. The carbon that makes up shungite has electro-conductivity and chemical resistance due to the wide array of minerals that make up the stone including carbon, iron, silicon, aluminum, magnesium, sulfur, calcium and phosphorus. Elite shungite contains large amounts of fullerenes and can be used to purify water. In order to make shungite water you can infuse 50-70 grams of shungite in one liter of water and soak for two to three days.

All in all, crystals have amazing qualities and vibrate at a specific, high frequency. Frequencies make up our reality. Surrounding yourself by positive, high-vibrational frequencies will help you feel better overall. What if crystals are not really a hoax? Along with being beautiful to have around, they may be shifting and raising the vibration in your body and home.

Dr. Andrea Wick is a chiropractor and applied kinesiologist. She graduated from Life University in Marietta, Georgia, and now practices at Healing Hands Chiropractic in Big Sky. She has a passion for holistic health care and being active in the outdoors.

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Beaver // *Castor canadensis*



DID YOU KNOW?

- 100 colonies estimated in 2015 in Yellowstone National Park

- One colony may support 2-14 beavers that are usually related. Six is considered average

- YNP's beavers escaped most of the trapping that occurred in the 1800s due to the region's inaccessibility

Unregulated trapping, deforestation, and destruction of dams due to unwanted flooding have continued to affect the beaver population.

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American Life in Poetry: Column 76

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. POET LAUREATE

Here's a poem about something that each of us receives, though only once. If you didn't get yours written into a poem, you've got it put away somewhere. Wyatt Townley lives in Kansas, and "First Kiss" is from her new book, "Rewriting the Body," from Stephen F. Austin State University Press.

First Kiss

Here you are forty years
later in a white coat
examining my ears.

All I can think
is how your tongue once
turned in the tunnel

you're peering into. The
fault is not in my ears,
but between them!

No one can see that far.
But could we gaze back
through the years and dead stars

to the doorstep of my parents' house,
you bending down with your tall mouth
to make the softest landing on mine,

having thrown off my balance
so tenderly, can you explain,
good Doctor, how to regain it?

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

<p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Noted psychiatrist</p> <p>5 Adverb (abbr.)</p> <p>8 Carplike fish</p> <p>12 Forest ox</p> <p>13 Plead</p> <p>14 Norse mythical hero</p> <p>15 Eire legislature</p> <p>16 Jutting rock</p> <p>17 Point</p> <p>18 Phoenician princess</p> <p>20 Occasional contraction</p> <p>23 Knot lace</p> <p>24 Spear-shaped</p> <p>28 Pall</p> <p>32 Singleton</p> <p>33 Tree</p> <p>35 Classic car</p> <p>36 Calorie</p> <p>39 Name</p> <p>42 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)</p> <p>44 Defamatory remark</p> <p>45 Grape</p> <p>48 Scope</p> <p>52 High (pref.)</p> <p>53 Girdle</p> <p>55 Muttonfish</p> <p>56 Unknown author</p> <p>57 Indo-Chin. people</p> <p>58 Hall (Ger.)</p> <p>59 Gender</p> <p>60 Compass direction</p> <p>61 Year</p>	<p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Gem</p> <p>2 Two-toed sloth</p> <p>3 Black (Fr.)</p> <p>4 Uncouth person</p> <p>5 Moon goddess</p> <p>6 Pair</p> <p>7 Russ. distance measure</p> <p>8 Argument</p> <p>9 Culture medium</p> <p>10 Circuit (abbr.)</p> <p>11 River into the North Sea</p> <p>19 Size of coal</p> <p>21 Bird's cry</p> <p>24 Cloche</p> <p>25 Exclamation</p> <p>26 Look</p> <p>27 Guido's note (2 words)</p>	<p>ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>G</td><td>L</td><td>E</td><td>N</td><td>R</td><td>O</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>X</td><td>L</td><td>E</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>G</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>I</td></tr> <tr><td>G</td><td>I</td><td>L</td><td>A</td><td>P</td><td>I</td><td>A</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>I</td><td>L</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>V</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>N</td><td>I</td><td>A</td><td>P</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>R</td></tr> <tr><td>L</td><td>A</td><td>D</td><td>K</td><td>E</td><td>N</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>G</td><td>H</td><td>A</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>J</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>O</td><td>A</td><td>K</td><td>K</td><td>I</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>G</td><td>A</td><td>L</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>E</td><td>C</td><td>T</td><td>U</td><td>R</td><td>B</td><td>A</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>L</td><td>E</td><td>A</td><td>V</td><td>I</td><td>E</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>U</td><td>D</td><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>C</td><td>O</td><td>N</td><td>D</td><td>O</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>N</td><td>A</td><td>G</td><td>R</td><td>E</td><td>M</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>E</td><td>L</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>I</td><td>I</td><td>C</td><td>O</td><td>X</td><td>A</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>O</td><td>A</td><td>R</td><td>B</td><td>L</td><td>T</td><td>T</td><td>E</td><td>T</td><td>H</td></tr> </table>	G	L	E	N	R	O	B	A	B	A	S	A	X	L	E	A	B	A	G	A	B	I	G	I	L	A	P	I	A	A	N	I	L	E	V	E	R	N	I	A	P	I	C	R	L	A	D	K	E	N						G	H	A	Y	N	J	A	N	B	A	N	O	A	K	K	I	A	N	G	A	L	A	A	B	A	E	C	T	U	R	B	A	N	L	E	A	V	I	E						S	U	D	A	N	C	O	N	D	O	N	A	N	A	G	R	E	M	A	B	E	L	N	I	D	E	I	I	C	O	X	A		S	O	A	R	B	L	T	T	E	T	H
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Corner Quote

“A family is a risky venture, because the greater the love, the greater the loss. That’s the trade-off. But I’ll take it all.”

– Brad Pitt

BIG SKY BEATS



Belly of the Beast – Mandolin Orange

In early September, just over a year after performing in Big Sky, the folk group Mandolin Orange released two songs, including “Belly of the Beast,” from their upcoming 2020 album. Following their last successful album “Tides of Tears,” the new material moves past the grief addressed by the previously well-received compilation while still showcasing the same strong imagery and metaphors that make for such a wistful listen. The soothing harmony of married musical duo Andrew Marlin and Emily Frantz pairs comfortably with their own instrumentals as well as those of their touring band. Although Marlin and Frantz hail from North Carolina, their lyrics are often reminiscent of quiet moments spent out in Big Sky country: “A northwest gem just nestled in a mountain greeted me early with the peaceful sounds.” “Belly of the Beast” offers a beautiful listen any time of the day and stokes the excitement for the upcoming album.



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IF YOU SMELL GAS, TAKE THE RIGHT STEPS.

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NEVER USE A STOVE OR BRING YOUR GAS GRILL INDOORS FOR SPACE HEATING, EVEN DURING A POWER OUTAGE.

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A DECADE IN BIG SKY



A quick look back over the last 10 years reveals the hefty changes the 2010s brought to Big Sky. Before leaping into a new era, take a moment to remember a significant decade.

Big Sky: A decade of transformation

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – Each New Year’s Eve, a countdown to midnight and popping champagne corks split the moment between an end and a beginning. The cycle of the past year comes to a close, and there exists a space in time for brief reflection before the glitter hits the floor.

On Dec. 31 of this year, the observance extends beyond simply celebrating a new year but rather a new decade; with more to commemorate comes more to reflect upon.

The past 10 years in Big Sky have been defined by transformative change. With visioning plans underway and construction on every corner, it’s becoming easier to imagine the next stages for this once-quaint mountain village, but perhaps there is still value in a quick glance over the shoulder.

Chet Huntley once said, “Just as important as working for the good life is finding a place to enjoy it.” Huntley, the famed TV newscaster, discovered his place in Big Sky after retiring from NBC in 1970, founding Big Sky Resort. Ever since, people from around the globe have been flocking in droves to a remarkably well-kept secret, following in Huntley’s footsteps and searching for a place to enjoy the good life.

Over the last 10 years, this growth trend has been particularly evident: Between 2010 and 2017, the U.S. Census American Community Survey estimated a population increase in Big Sky that exceeded 90 percent—five times that of Jackson Hole’s just south of the Montana-Wyoming border.

The real estate market has been reflective of the phenomenon, as well. According to a report composed by the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, in 2011 the average home price in Big Sky was \$600,000. In the Gallatin Association of Realtors’ most recent market report, that figure has risen to \$2,212,934. The rapid influx of people, while stimulating the market and bolstering a flowering economic environment, has presented challenges to local infrastructure, which struggles to support the swelling population and visitation figures.

While the past decade has borne a spike in certain adversities, Big Sky has also been fertile ground for innovation, with a number of groups and individuals across town working tirelessly to remedy the pressures.

In 2017, the town’s second stoplight was installed at the intersection of Lone Mountain Trail and Ousel Falls Road, easing some of the effects of mounting traffic woes.

The following year, Big Sky was awarded a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant to be used for the installation of multiple turning lanes as well as overall improvements to the Big Sky Transportation District, among other upgrades.

In eras past, medical emergencies forced residents to rush through the Gallatin Canyon to reach the nearest hospital in Bozeman. After a selection process which ultimately favored a proposal from Bozeman Health over Billings Clinic, the Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center opened its doors in December of 2015, cutting travel time to emergency and standard medical care from an hour to minutes.



The Big Sky Medical Center under construction. The Bozeman-Health-run hospital opened its doors on Dec. 12, 2015.

Taylor Middleton, chair of the BSMC board, now known as the Big Sky Medical Center Community Council, expressed amazement at how quickly the historic project took shape from groundbreaking to completion after 15 laborious years of planning. “Within two years [of construction] we were building a hospital right here in this place where cows, and for that matter, buffalo, used to roam,” he said during the ribbon cutting ceremony in 2015.



Big Sky Resort has introduced a number of improvements over the last decade, including the installation of Ramcharger 8, an aerial lift on Andesite Mountain that features heated seats and a weather-proof bubble. PHOTO BY ED COYLE

In response to a pressing housing crisis among Big Sky’s workforce population, the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce sought to bring forth solutions through the creation of the Big Sky Housing Trust, now part of HRDC. In May of this year, the housing trust celebrated a monumental victory as they cut the ribbon on Meadowview Condominiums, Big Sky’s first deed-restricted workforce housing project.

Big Sky expansions have not been purely logistical and infrastructural; significant headway has been made in the entertainment sector of town over the 2010s. Days before Thanksgiving in 2011,

Lone Peak Cinema opened for its debut, screening ski films featuring Matchstick Productions’ “La Niña” and Teton Gravity Research’s “One for the Road.”

In true Big Sky fashion, hordes of community members turned out to fill the plush new seats in the two theaters and get fired up for the ski season, all while supporting members of the community on their entrepreneurial endeavor. The cinema has found success in its creative diversification over the years, adding special events such as Halloween HorrorFest, the Big Sky Shootout and a weekly trivia night.

The space surrounding the movie theater, not long ago a plot of dirt, has also adopted a new look. These days, colloquially referred to as “downtown,” Town Center boasts a broad selection of shopping and dining venues.

“In 2011, it seemed like the theater building was an island sitting all alone,” Lone Peak Cinema co-owner Sally Fisher told Explore Big Sky in a 2018 interview. “We would have nights where no one came to see a movie, and out on the streets it seemed like a ghost



Events like the Big Sky PBR, once hopeful gatherings, have blossomed into sold-out successes. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO



Music in the Mountains has become a Big Sky favorite, packing the park in Town Center every Thursday throughout the summer. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO

town. It is amazing how much [livelier] the Town Center has become with great restaurants and shopping.”

In the first summer of the decade, music breathed life into the up-and-coming area on July 13, 2010, when the Infamous Stringdusters broke in the new stage at the park in Town Center, enchanting Big Sky with bluegrass and promising attendees many more nights like that to come. A decade later, that promise is more than realized—Big Sky community members voted the free Thursday night Music in the Mountains series as the Best Annual Event in town for 2019.

The Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, another entertainment staple in Big Sky, began offering shows in 2013. Formerly the old school gymnasium, WMPAC brings local music and theater along with international acts to the community, popping the insular “small-town bubble.” Like Music in the Mountains, the WMPAC’s performances impress more with each new year.

And Big Sky Resort, the founding pillar of recreation in the town of Big Sky, has seen changes of its own over the last 10 years too, undergoing a number of pivotal expansions.

In 2013, CrossHarbor Capital Partners LLC joined Boyne Resorts in purchasing the assets of Moonlight Basin, expanding Big Sky Resort’s skiable terrain by 5,700 acres and supporting the “Biggest Skiing in America” brand. Between 2016 and 2018, the resort replaced four major ski lifts with more efficient models, including the introduction of Ramcharger 8, the continent’s most technologically advanced chairlift to date.

Beyond the scope of the resort, the nonprofit Big Sky Community Organization has been tirelessly improving the trail systems in all

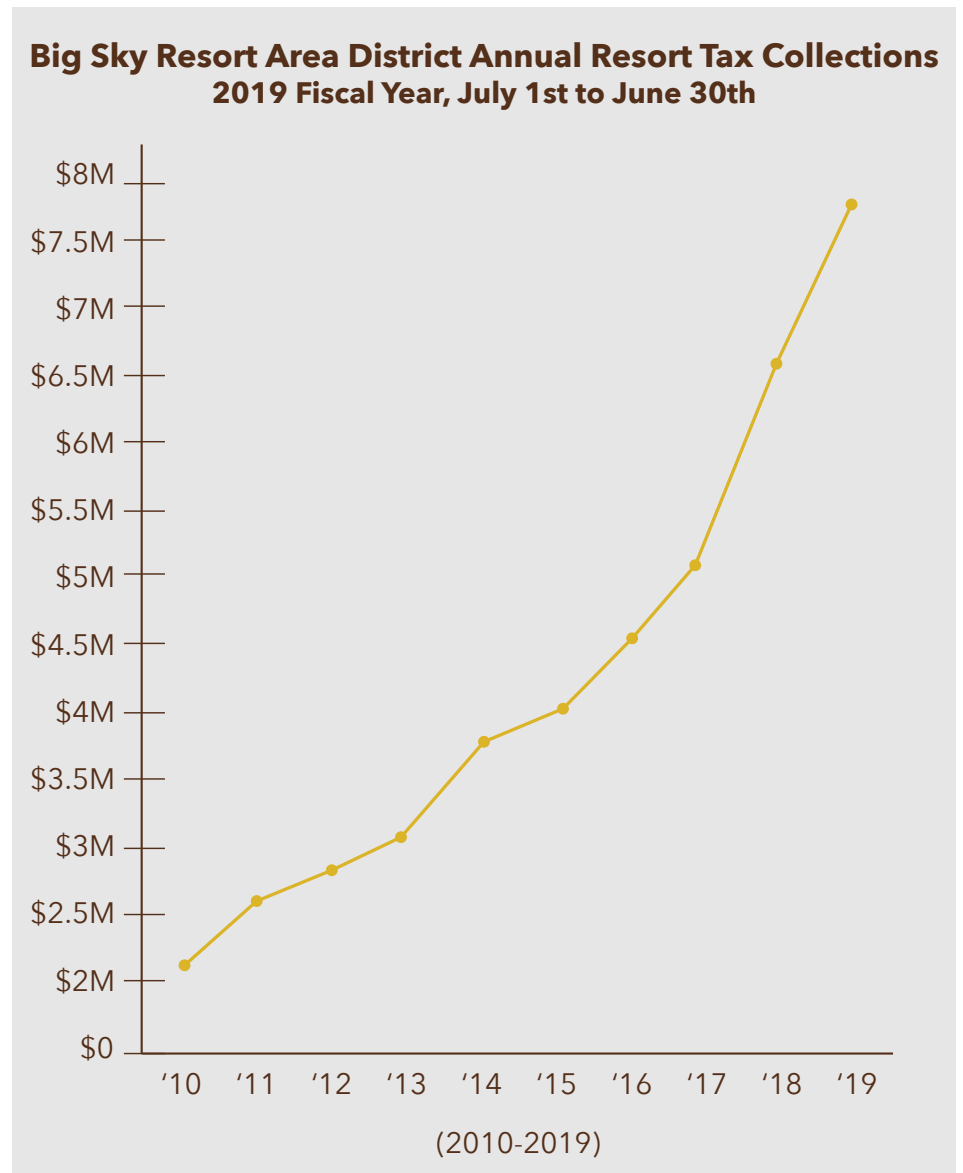


The Town Center build-out has been a non-stop work in progress for over 10 years with new buildings popping up frequently.

corners of Big Sky and the surrounding area, forging paths, portals in a sense, between pockets of natural beauty and the developed community areas. In the summer of 2014, BSCO’s popular trails Hummocks and Uplands opened within remarkable proximity to Town Center. And in 2017, the organization purchased land to expand the famous hiking destination, Beehive Basin.

From the mountain to the growing villages below, Big Sky has undergone a decade of intense metamorphosis. As we celebrate the passing of an unforgettable decade on Dec. 31, the town of Big Sky will look forward to the next 10 years, preparing for the planned, the expected and unseen.

Nostalgia is inevitable, as is excitement. But there is relief for any apprehension in a shared mission emblematic of Big Sky: stitching people together into the quilt of community, with the hopes of bringing welcome, joy, inspiration and purpose to all who call Big Sky home. Past, present and future.





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Reflecting on a decade



The Big Sky Community Organization broke ground for the new community center on July 27, 2019. The center, which is called BASE, is projected to be finished summer 2021. PHOTO BY DAVE PECUNIES



A stoked Big Sky crowd celebrates the coming winter season at the Pray for Snow party at the Lone Peak Cinema in 2012. The theater opened the year before by screening two ski films. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO



After its opening in the fall of 2009, Lone Peak High School graduated its first class of two the following spring. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Big Sky's outdoor ice rink, established in 2011, provides Big Sky with a plethora of winter activities. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO



The Music in the Mountains series has delighted the Big Sky community in Town Center for a decade by featuring local favorites like Dammit Lauren and the Well paired with big-name national acts. PHOTO BY KENE SPERRY



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We are so honored and flattered to be voted Big Sky's Best Interior Design team for the 2nd year in a row. We feel so fortunate we get to come to work and do what we love in a town that is so generous, loving and full of energy. Thank you Outlaw, for providing a creative and exciting platform for us to share what we do and give back to the community. Cheers to a snow and sun filled 2020 and all it has to offer here in our cozy little corner of the world. Thank you Big Sky!

Wishing you all Wellness and a Well Appointed home,

Erika, Jesse, Shana and Katy

245 TOWN CENTER AVE - BIG SKY, MT

A TEN YEAR LOOKBACK

My, How Big Sky Has Grown

2010

Lone Peak High School graduates first class

After its grand opening in 2009, Lone Peak High School graduated its first senior class of but two students. Ten years later, and many students now graduate from the high school with an International Baccalaureate diploma. Many have matriculated to prestigious universities around the nation.



2011

Ice Skating R opens in Town Center

Through the efforts of local organizations as well as community support, the park in Town Center was transformed into a frozen recreation area. The first few years of the new winter recreation area provided many opportunities. The popularity of the rink recently expanded by installing a new refrigeration system that provides optimal skating conditions, aka rinks on the sheet.



2011

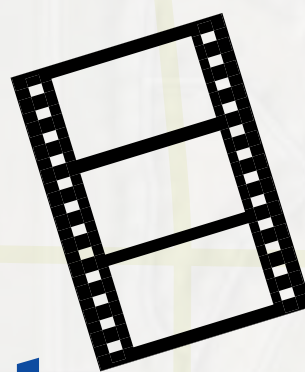
First PBR takes Big Sky by storm

Spectating from hay bales and atop buses, a lucky crowd witnessed the first Professional Bull Riders event in Big Sky. In 2011, Outlaw Partners, the event's producer, had to work tirelessly to convince people to attend. Today, PBR tickets sell out for premiere nights in a matter of minutes, a testament to the event's mainstay popularity.

2010

First free concert debuts on newly minted Town Center Stage

The Infamous Stringdusters broke in the brand-new stage in Town Center with a lively show in the first summer of the decade, setting the tone for the free music series that continues to grow each summer. Music in the Mountains, a local and visitor favorite, was voted by the community as best annual event of 2019.



2013

WMPAC opens

Dreams of converting a building into a state-of-the-art arts center became a reality through extensive construction work. The first season of the Warren M. Phipps Arts Center featured a variety of performances, including Moth Mainstage and the Big Sky Ballet, which has returned.

2011

Lone Peak Cinema opens its doors

Bolstering the Big Sky entertainment scene, Lone Peak Cinema opened for its first screenings right before Thanksgiving and Big Sky Resort's opening day, showing two ski films. Today, the theater remains a local hub for family activities, date nights and catching up with friends over a beer.



Big Sky



2013

Boyne and CrossHarbor purchase Moonlight Basin

In a partnership with CrossHarbor Capital Partners LLC, Boyne Resorts purchased the assets of Moonlight Basin, expanding Big Sky Resort's skiing terrain to 5,700 acres. The acquisition not only expanded skiing options but also the resort's image, contributing largely to the "Biggest Skiing in America" brand.

2018

Big Sky Community Organization purchases land for community center

With the help of a major grant from the Len Hill Charitable Trust, private donations and a public fundraising campaign, BSCO purchased a 3.3-acre parcel of land in Town Center. The property is projected to be home to BASE, Big Sky's first community center, by summer 2021.



2015

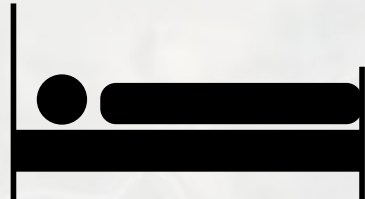
First hospital opens in Big Sky

After Bozeman Health was selected from two competing proposals to open a medical center in Big Sky—the other being from Billings Clinic—Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center made local history when it opened its doors to patients. Although it only took a couple of years for the structure to go up, the process of opening the clinic spanned roughly 15 years.

2019

Marriott opens Wilson Hotel in Town Center

Big Sky Town Center's first branded hotel opened its doors this past summer on June 21, continuing the process of building out Big Sky's evolving downtown area. The construction of the 129-room hotel was accompanied by the formation of a plaza, where community events, such as the cherished Big Sky Farmers Markets, will be hosted.





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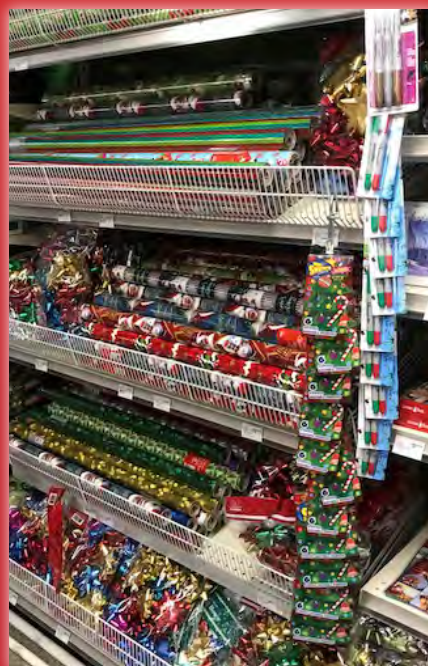
Tuesday 12/24. 7 - 6

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Beautiful alpine meadow property with outstanding views of Lone Peak, the Spanish Peaks as well as Ramshorn Peak. One of the most private and spectacular build sites in Big Sky.



TBD COWBOY HEAVEN | \$890,000
#334600 | CALL DON

Ski-in, ski-out property in Moonlight Basin Resort. The build site is on the south side of the property just above a ski trail, easy access to a build site due to an access easement across an adjacent property.



TBD TALUS TRAIL | \$539,000
#335211 | CALL DON

Large, 21.82 acre property providing a lot of privacy, views and easy all season access, yet close to schools and businesses. A true end of the road property.



40 BIG SKY RESORT RD #1981 | \$500,000
#329728 | CALL TONI

This unit with a loft faces Andesite Mtn. and has a full kitchen and fireplace. Excellent place for a ski retreat, summer trip, or relaxing getaway with all the amenities of a hotel.



TIMBERLOFT DR LOT 22B | \$485,000
#206525 | CALL DON

Outstanding forested parcel w/ views of Lone Mtn. Grassy meadows w/ forested building site. Additional acreage available up to 140± more acres. End of the road privacy!

DON PILOTTE BROKER, GRI, NCE, RRS, SFR 406.580.0155 | **ANDREW INCHES** SALES ASSOCIATE 406.581.6595 | **BRUCE WINTER** SALES ASSOCIATE, GRI 406.581.4658
KATIE ERBES SALES ASSOCIATE 406.579.3639 | **PETER MACKENZIE** SALES ASSOCIATE 406.223.1195 | **TONI DELZER** SALES ASSOCIATE 406.570.3195

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ENGEL & VÖLKERS

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2665 Bobtail Horse Road | \$1,565,000 | MLS# 338041

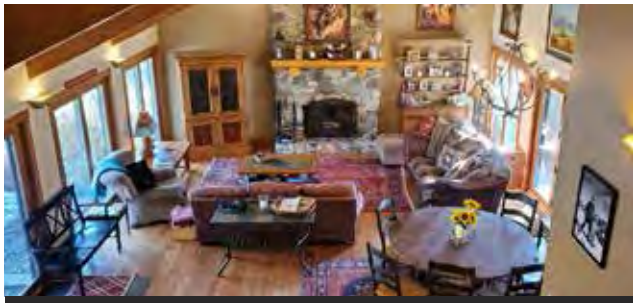


Black Eagle Lodge, Unit 29 | \$1,450,000 | MLS# 340727



Crail Creek Condo 612 | \$ 785,000 | MLS# 338452

TRUST EXPERIENCE



3145 Two Moons | \$ 1,200,000 | MLS# 340917



Summit Hotel 10808 | \$ 325,000 | MLS# 330037



Low Dog Rd, Lot 243 | \$ 495,000 | MLS# 340625

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BEST OF BIG SKY 2019

THE RESULTS ARE IN
WITH RECORD VOTING!

COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR

1ST DICK ALLGOOD

For more than a quarter century Dick Allgood has made Big Sky home, cementing his legacy in various pockets of the everchanging town over time. Many know him as owner of an old local's favorite Allgood's Bar and Grill, which Allgood opened shortly after arriving in Big Sky in 1993 and ran for 18 years.

Before Allgood was a business owner, though, he made his mark overseas in Vietnam, serving the country during the war as a U.S. Air Force pilot. He has been an active member of the Big Sky post of the American Legion, on which he currently serves as adjutant. In 2017, he was recognized for his valor and continued commitment to bettering his community as one of 14 recipients of the Montana Congressional Veterans Commendation.

"I always tried to give back to the community more than I took out of it," Allgood said. The last few years as he battled health issues the community recognized his outstanding dedication to Big Sky by returning the favor, supporting him with kind notes and additional aid.

Allgood holds closest in his heart the bonds forged in nearly three decades of residency in Big Sky. "The biggest thing for me here is the overwhelming number of friendships and relationships with people over the years," he remarked while choking back tears. "It's been a very important part of my life."



2ND DOUG BING

Doug Bing can still recall driving through the Gallatin Canyon for the first time in 1973 and knowing Big Sky was the place for him. Shortly afterward, he moved and started Blue Ribbon Builders. He married his wife, JoDean, and raised his three kids in the place he has called home for so long and continues to be an integral and long-standing part of the growing community.

3RD JACKIE ROBIN

Jackie Robin not only owned The Hungry Moose Market and Deli, perhaps one of Big Sky's most distinguishable staples, for nearly 25 years, she was often the one helping you behind the counter and greeting you in the store with a smile. Inspired by hardship in her own life, Robin also started the annual Soul Shine, an evening in remembrance of her late husband, Mark, and to raise awareness and funds for ALS.

BEST BUSINESS

1ST ACE HARDWARE

Ace Hardware has been an integral part of the community in Big Sky for nearly two and a half decades. Its involvement in the community is one of its team's core values and sponsorship of the "Spike for the Cure" volleyball game is just one of the ways that they give back. With a business model focused on the nuts and bolts of customer service, it's no wonder that Ace took home the top spot for best business in Big Sky. Whether you need a 16-millimeter wrench, a new snow shovel or kitchenware, the helpful staff will greet you and help you find exactly what you need as soon as you walk through the doors.

"We're just proud to get recognized for the high level of service that we really try and train hard to provide for the community and to be recognized at achieving that is humbling," said Ace Owner Kevin Barton. "Ace, as a corporation, has the slogan 'The Helpful Place,' so we train from day one so that the associates can be helpful and it's their mission to seek out customers to help. When we get applause for that, it makes it worthwhile that we're doing the right thing." acebigskytools.com



2ND TWO PINES PROPERTIES

With an office located in Big Sky Town Center, Two Pines Properties is ready to serve visitors and property owners alike. Voters recognized Two Pines' expertise and customer service as top qualities. twopines.com

3RD GALLATIN ALPINE SPORTS

For the 25th year, Gallatin Alpine Sports is proud to offer outdoor gear to those inspired to get out and go in the Big Sky area. gallatinalpinesports.com

BEST RESTAURANT

1ST GALLATIN RIVERHOUSE GRILL

Among Big Sky eateries, few form a cultural cornerstone the way the Gallatin Riverhouse Grill does; with its unwavering "always for the locals" credo and delicious Texas-style barbecue, the Riverhouse is a restaurant for all but especially for locals.

From hosting shoulder-season Bingo nights—evenings of intense competition, benevolent heckling, camaraderie and fundraising for local causes—to evenings following performances at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center across the street, to nights sitting around the outside fire pits, \$7 friend chicken, cold beer and good friends in between, the Gallatin Riverhouse Grill is there for Big Sky—and with a dependable seven-day-a-week schedule.

"You know, we're for the locals—we do it all for the locals, and we're happy for the support," said Greg "Carnie" Lisk, who co-owns the Riverhouse with business partner Kyle Wisniewski. "I also want to thank everyone for the patience when we're busy. We couldn't do it without the locals and the help of our incredible staff." gallatinriverhousegrill.com



2ND OLIVE B'S BIG SKY BISTRO

Last year's crowned victor, Olive B's Big Sky Bistro was a close second due to their consistent and delicious menu that has secured a loyal patronage over the years. olivebsbigsky.com

3RD HORN AND CANTLE

Serving up rustic American cuisine and steaks in a cozy, modern, log cabin-inspired lodge, Horn and Cantle at Lone Mountain Ranch is always a crowd pleaser. hornandcantle.com

BEST BAR

1ST BLUE BUDDHA SUSHI

That didn't take long. After opening in Town Center a stone's throw from The Wilson Hotel, Blue Buddha Sushi has quickly emerged as the premier place to belly up and grab a drink in town—a town with no shortage of establishments serving alcohol. With \$3 handrolls during happy hour, \$2 Coors all the time, as well as more exotic fare and beverages, Blue Buddha Sushi might even become a contender for Best Restaurant in the near future.

“When I heard we won, I felt extremely honored for the award,” said owner Troy “Twist” Thompson. “We’ve only been open for four months, so it’s a great accomplishment, but now I feel like we need to earn it. We need to put in the work to prove it during the busiest times of the year.” bluebuddhasushilounge.com



2ND BEEHIVE BASIN BREWERY

No TVs, just great beer and conversation are the recipe that makes Beehive Basin Brewery one of our favorite local watering holes. Co-owners Casey Folley and Andy Liedburg's taproom, now four years old, is also a favorite meeting place for Big Sky dogs. EBS recommends starting off your visit with a pale ale. beehivebasinbrewery.com

3RD THE ROCKS TASTING ROOM

Another newcomer found its way onto the best bar list. Ever since moving into the space previously occupied by the Cave Spirits and Gifts, The Rocks became a favorite destination to grab Montana-made beer and spirits. Owners Ben and Kara Blodgett have got a good thing going. the-rocks-tasting-room-and-liquor-store.business.site/

BEST LOCAL MEAL DEAL

1ST LONE PEAK BREWERY

Lone Peak Brewery Owners Steve and Vicki Nordahl have concocted a new deal for the locals of Big Sky. The “Pint Pass” allows members to sip and dine at prices similar to that of happy hour, any day and any time. Hop into Lone Peak Brewery and get your pass to enjoy your favorite brews at a price that you'll “barley” notice.

“It's kind of cool having a new category in the voting this year,” Steve said. “That's exactly what the Pint Pass is there to do: which is reward the locals. We're in a tourist town, we have no choice but to charge tourist prices, but we get the fact that that's not ideal for the folks that are trying to live [here] every day. So that gives them, essentially, happy hour prices all the time.” lonepeakbrewery.com



2ND GALLATIN RIVERHOUSE GRILL

With a variety of meal options to choose from and an ample amount of live music on tap, you're sure to find something to suit your fancy and your wallet at the Gallatin Riverhouse. gallatinriverhousegrill.com

3RD BLUE MOON BAKERY

Whether it's slices, scones, or a salad you seek, Blue Moon Bakery has you covered for any meal of the day. bigskybluemoonbakery.com

BEST SALON

1ST THE TRIBE

A rockstar in the studio and also in real life, Hanna Powell opened up The Tribe behind the post office in the Meadow Village three years ago and Big Sky has a better looking population because of it. You can't visit The Tribe and not leave feeling like a million bucks. Book an appointment with Hanna or Erin Mulhern and you won't be disappointed with the results.

"We at the Tribe want to sincerely thank our awesome community for the continued support," said Powell, who grew up on the other side of Lone Mountain in Harrison and Ennis. "It's hard to believe we have been open for almost three years. Happy Holidays from Hanna and Erin!" tribesalonbigsky.com/



2ND HAIR NINJA SALON

Offering a full range of services, from hair coloring, eyelash extensions, manicures/pedicures and full body waxing, the Hair Ninja Salon boasts a relaxing atmosphere where Leah Clendenin and her staff have silently mastered the craft of beautification. hairninasalon.com/

3RD MOUNTAIN HAVEN SALON

Located in the Bighorn Center, Jaci Sand's Mountain Haven Salon provides a welcoming atmosphere where Sand and her staff consistently demonstrate their gift for making their clients comfortable and pulchritudinous. schedulingcity.com/scheduling/mhs793

BEST BUILDER

1ST BIG SKY BUILD

For the fifth consecutive year, Big Sky Build takes home the crown for best builder. Having been in the business for 12 years, they know a thing or two when it comes to building. With homes in the Yellowstone Club, Spanish Peaks and Moonlight Basin, they continue to enrich our community with architecture that compliments our mountain vistas.

"Big Sky Build is once again thrilled to be recognized for this incredible award. It is hard to put into words what this means to the men and women of our company," said Big Sky Build President John Seelye. "I would like to acknowledge that besides the hard work of the Big Sky Build crew that we couldn't do it without our valued sub-contractors, suppliers, architects, design teams and our clients. Thank you all! To my direct coworkers and to the community of Big Sky, I love and support you all." bigskybuild.com



2ND BLUE RIBBON BUILDERS

With over 40 years of constructing exquisite homes under their belt, BRB continues to pursue excellence and innovation in all their projects around town. blueribbonbuilders.com

3RD HIGHLINE PARTNERS

Highline Partners has built a sterling reputation as a boutique home-builder focused on green and sustainable construction methods and materials. highline-partners.com

BEST BURGER

1ST BY WORD OF MOUTH

Winning the distinction of Best Burger anywhere is no easy feat—by a certain age, most Americans will have consumed thousands in their lifetime. So for By Word of Mouth to win the award back-to-back years, their place in burger-making history is forever solidified.

The basis for this double-decker accomplishment is easy to understand—complete with two Montana Angus beef patties, BYWOM's "special sauce," lettuces, pickles, cheese, caramelized onions and a Wheat Montana bun, and served with garlic fries and coleslaw, The BYWOM Burger is the real deal.

"Thanks to the locals that make this happen," said Pam Flach, co-owner and -founder of Bywom. "It's always fun to watch people take that first bite."

Pair with a cold beer or one of their hallmark craft cocktails and you have yourself the best burger in Big Sky.

opentable.com/by-word-of-mouth



2ND LONE PEAK BREWERY

With an ample pairing of freshly made, local beer and a wide selection of mouth-watering burgers, Lone Peak Brewery came in close second for Big Sky's best burger selection. lonepeakbrewery.com

3RD CORRAL BAR, STEAKHOUSE & MOTEL

Considered one of the last bastions for the true Big Sky local, the Corral Bar, Steakhouse & Motel serves up juicy, sizzling burgers—and fast. corralbar.com

BEST OUTDOOR RETAILER

1ST GRIZZLY OUTFITTERS

With a name like Grizzly Outfitters, it's no wonder they're revered as the Best Outdoor Shop in Big Sky for 2019. Located deep in the heart of bear country, Grizzly is well equipped to outfit anyone for the multitude of outdoor ventures in the Big Sky area and beyond. From the hikers to the bikers to the riders in your life, Grizzly Outfitters has you covered whether you're looking for rentals or new gear to buy. They will even custom fit your gear to make it suit you perfectly. Stop in and say hi when you're out and about, don't worry, the staff doesn't bite.

"It means a ton," said Andrew Schreiner, who co-owns Grizzly with business partner Ken Lancey. "My crew works hard every year and I really love the fact that the community appreciates what we do and that it can be reflected by being selected as Best of Big Sky." grizzlyoutfitters.com



2ND GALLATIN ALPINE SPORTS

For the 25th year, Gallatin Alpine Sports is proud to offer outdoor gear to those inspired to get out and go in the Big Sky area. gallatinalpinesports.com

3RD EAST SLOPE OUTDOORS

Following a 2016 finish as Best Business of Big Sky, East Slope Outdoors will now take their rank amongst the Best Outdoor Shops in Big Sky, offering ski, ride and fly fishing services. eastslopeoutdoors.com

BEST SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

1ST ROXY'S MARKET & CAFE

That feeling of checking out at the grocery store and shamefully toting your items away in a plastic bag is all too familiar- unless you shop at Roxy's. Since its inception, Big Sky's newest grocery store has been on a green mission to make their business more sustainable, and patrons have taken notice.

Roxy's uses compostable bags whose durability allows for up to 100 reuses. The store was also one of the community's first businesses to compost in an effort to reduce a portion of the heavy waste many grocery stores often create. Behind-the-scenes efforts contribute to Roxy's commitment to the planet, as well. Store management offers incentives to employees who commute to work sustainably as well as to those who quit smoking.

"[We] don't do this for the publicity," said Josh Treasure, Roxy's general manager, adding that he hopes other businesses will follow suit. "We do this because it's the right thing to do." Roxymarket.com



2ND FULL CIRCLE RECYCLING

Full Circle Recycling aims to make recycling a convenient and cost-efficient option. By servicing the Big Sky community, Full Circle helps residents to limit their impact and acts on behalf of the environment that makes Big Sky such a special place. Werecyclemt.com

3RD YES COMPOST

The only composting service offered in Big Sky, Karl Johnson's one-man show inspired by passion and hard work allows businesses and households in the community to actively participate in "closing the loop" between food waste and food growth. yescompost.com

BEST HOTEL - BIG SKY

1ST LONE MOUNTAIN RANCH

Standing alone atop the list of Best Hotel/Ranch/Lodge is Lone Mountain Ranch. With over a century of experience hosting guests, LMR has earned its stripes as a world-renowned establishment. Offering activities such as cross-country skiing, horseback rides and snowshoeing, just to name a few, boredom will be one thing you can't find there.

"It is an absolute honor to be selected for this award and we are very thankful for it," said Abril Gruber, the director of operations for Lone Mountain Ranch. Accompanied by the Horn & Cattle Restaurant right on site, LMR visitors can sample everything that Big Sky has to offer from blue-ribbon trout fishing streams to fine-dining cuisine. LMR has a lengthy list of honors, including being named one of the "Unique Lodges of the World" by National Geographic. lonemountainranch.com



2ND BUCK'S T-4

Buck's T-4 has all of your home-away-from-home needs covered. Dine in at their on-site restaurant before retiring to their cozy, rustic accommodations after a long day on the slopes or the Gallatin River. buckst4.com

3RD THE WILSON HOTEL

The newcomer to the Big Sky hospitality industry is The Wilson Hotel. Located in the heart of a burgeoning Town Center, Marriott's Montana venture has quickly become a mainstay of our local economy. marriott.com

BEST NONPROFIT

1ST BIG SKY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

The BSCO makes our little mountain hamlet a better place for everyone who lives, works and plays here. Continually improving our trails and parks, making connections between individuals participating in their myriad programs, our local 'Parks and Recreation' crew undoubtedly supports healthier, happier and more connected lifestyles for Big Sky denizens and visitors alike. Just go watch a softball game or take a hike on Beehive Basin Trail #40.

"It means a lot to the entire Big Sky Community Organization team to be recognized in this capacity by the people we serve, when we work alongside so many wonderful nonprofits in our community," said BSCO Executive Director Ciara Wolfe. "So thank you for the love Big Sky, the feeling is mutual." bscomt.org



2ND BIG SKY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Seasonal unemployment and the high cost of living in Big Sky and the surrounding Gallatin Valley leave many residents feeling the struggle of making ends meet despite being fully employed. That's where the food bank has come to rescue for nearly eight years. The BSCFB bridges the gap when clients are in a food emergency, helping Big Sky become a more stable and livable place for everyone. bigskyfoodbank.org

3RD BIG SKY SKI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Providing world-class ski education in nordic, alpine and freeride disciplines to well over 120 young athletes, many of whom are competitive on the national level, the BSSEF provides the opportunity for kids to become great skiers while learning how to compete and enjoy life in the mountains. bssef.com

BEST ARCHITECT

1ST CENTRE SKY ARCHITECTURE

Centre Sky Architecture has been in the business of helping people shape their lives—and their homes—for 16 years. Since 1998, Principal Architect Jamie Dugaard and his team have been turning dream homes into a reality, with four offices sprinkled throughout the Rocky Mountains.

"Centre Sky Architecture is humbled to be named Big Sky's Best Architect," said Centre Sky office manager Meghan Altman. "Throughout the years it has been a pleasure to work with such amazing clients, designing their dream homes and projects. Big Sky has always attracted the best people and being able to work hand in hand with the local builders, interior designers and various artisans has been a pleasure! We cannot image a better place to work than Big Sky. Thank you!" centresky.com



2ND FAURE HALVERSON ARCHITECTS

Faure Halverson Architects does it all. From the architecture to the engineering, Faure Halverson serves a large portion of the western U.S. fharchitects.com

3RD BECHTLE ARCHITECTS

Bechtle Architects have deep roots in Big Sky as they have designed many of the buildings throughout Town Center and Big Sky Resort. bechtlearchitects.com

BEST PHOTOGRAPHER

1ST RYAN TURNER

From shooting stunning landscapes to capturing a perfect powder slash on Lone Peak, local photographer Ryan Turner knows what it means to encapsulate the essence and spirit of Big Sky country in a still frame. Turner is passionate about using light and scenery to create art that can be appreciated in various presentations. This past year, Turner and his wife, Angi, celebrated the 20-year anniversary of Ryan Turner photography, which they started in Big Sky in 1999.

"I'm super thankful that I get to do what I love and be creative," Turner said. He also expressed gratitude for the opportunity he often gets in the community to pass on his knowledge and encourage the next generation of artists.

With a great appreciation for community and the outdoors, Turner has called Big Sky home for 23 years. "The support I get from clients allows me to be able to make art," he said. "I'm blessed."

ryanturnerphotography.com



2ND DAVE PECUNIES

Dave Pecunies employs his style of raw authenticity enhanced by a unique and creative perspective to capture the mountain town lifestyle. Pecunies shoots a range of subjects, from community events to landscapes to wildlife of the West. davepecunies.com

BEST ARTIST

1ST HEATHER RAPP

Heather Rapp's art brightens Big Sky with vibrant colors and whimsical patterns in various corners of the community. Rapp was raised in the mountains of Montana and Colorado, and many of her pieces are characterized by mountain landscapes and wildlife creatively elevated through palette knives, spray bottles and saturated colors that effectively capture the magic of the high alpine.

"Being able to share my own unique vision of the nature that surrounds us in such a vibrant way I hope can bring energy to the community," said the local artist whose work can be found wrapped around local utility boxes or hanging from walls of many Big Sky businesses.

Rapp expressed appreciation for the positive manner in which Big Sky often receives her creative vulnerability. "I am so grateful that I live in such a supportive community."

Heatherrapp.com



2ND KIRA FERCHO

Kira Fercho captures the spirit of the West in her oil paintings of the region's people, landscapes and animals. Trained in Russian impressionism and Western tonalism, Fercho brings a unique style and important subject matter to Big Sky. kirafercho.com

BEST TOURIST ATTRACTION

1ST BIG SKY RESORT

Built around mighty Lone Mountain, the town of Big Sky owes its beginning to Big Sky Resort. Established in 1973, Big Sky Resort has been capturing the hearts of visitors for nearing half a century. Offering summer activities such as hiking and mountain biking and continuing the long-loved tradition of presenting premier skiing for experts and newbies alike, the Boyne-owned resort capitalizes on all the unique landscape has to offer.

Through the implementation of new amenities and technologies, Big Sky Resort continues to grow and improve. Now boasting Ramcharger 8 on Andesite Mountain, the most technologically advanced chairlift in North America, and a newly renovated base lodge now called The Exchange, the resort's commitment to creating a one-of-a-kind experience shows in many contexts.

"Thanks to the Big Sky community for this great honor!" said Troy Nedved, Big Sky Resort's general manager. "We can't wait to share The Exchange and Vista Hall with our guests this season. "[There's] more to come as we continue to fulfill our Big Sky 2025 Vision. More exciting upgrades are in the works."

bigskyresort.com



2ND OUSEL FALLS TRAIL

A popular destination for both locals and visitors, Ousel Falls Trail felt the impact of thousands of hiking boots this past year. A must-see under the reflecting light of the summer sun or petrified in the frigidity of winter, the well-developed trail offers a big reward for a short walk.

3RD YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Treasured as the nation's first national park, Yellowstone still boasts many of the same wonders that inspired its designation in 1872. Just a brief and scenic drive south from the town of Big Sky, Yellowstone National Park enriches the area with history, recreation and wildlife. nps.gov/yell

BEST SPA

1ST OZSSAGE

Hanging on the wall in the lobby of OZssage is a print of owner Jacque Raeger's son Alex backflipping on a pair of skis. "Let us help get you back on your feet" the sign reads. And this is exactly what Raeger and her staff pride themselves on at the best spa pick of the year: helping the active community of Big Sky stay well and enjoy all that the mountain landscape has to offer.

"What's special here is the community created between business and clients," OZssage manager Amanda Falk said. Raeger echoed the sentiment, calling OZssage a community spa rather than a resort spa.

By hand selecting compassionate therapists, Raeger ensures that the clients who have been visiting her for 20 years and those walking through the door for the first time will have a quality healing experience and leave feeling rejuvenated. ozssage.com



2ND SANTOSHA WELLNESS CENTER

For the last seven years, Santosha Wellness Center has been offering a space for various practices of health and wellness to the community of Big Sky, including a variety of massage practices from around the world and holistic healing services. Santosha is a go-to place for yoga as well as other spa services. santoshabigsky.com

3RD SOLACE SPA

Solace Spa at Big Sky Resort connects long ski days on Lone Mountain to relaxation and healing. Solace is a popular spa-treatment center for locals and tourists alike. bigskyresort.com/solace-spa-and-salon

BEST APRES SKI

1ST MONTANA JACK

After a day of sweeping turns on the mountain, an important decision must be made: where will après festivities take place? A sure choice is Montana Jack, which is conveniently located steps away from lifts in the base area. Always buzzing with energy from those fresh off the slopes, Montana Jack brings crowds with an appetite for post-ski celebrations and, on occasion, dancing.

Sarah Joyner, Montana Jack's general manager, expressed gratitude for the community's selection of best après spot: "Thanks to all who have joined us after their ski day to enjoy libations with friends, live music and great food. We are grateful for you - cheers to another great ski season!"

bigskyresort.com/resort-dining/montana-jack



2ND SCISSORBILLS SALOON

Scissorbills Saloon, a classic local's favorite, provides skiers with refreshing Montana draft beers, music and an exchange of stories from the day's best moments with familiar faces. scissorbills.com

3RD BEEHIVE BASIN BREWERY

Down the mountain in Town Center, Beehive Basin Brewery is a great place to wind down from a day on the slopes. With a selection of creative, in-house brews to brighten the dark winter evenings, Beehive is favorite among Big Sky skiers and boarders ... and their dogs. beehivebasinbrewery.com

BEST ANNUAL EVENT

1ST MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS

It may come as no surprise that the community voted Music in the Mountains as best annual event in Big Sky. The weekly summer performance attracts audiences in the thousands without fail each week, rain, shine or snow. Bringing premiere acts to the Town Center stage since 2010, the Arts Council of Big Sky sets loftier goals each year for booking quality national acts.

Brian Hurlbut, ACBS executive director, credits a portion of the free series' success to the people of Big Sky. "I think this selection is pretty appropriate," he said. "It's such a community event, and not just through the effort of the Art's Council. The way that the community has responded has allowed us to keep growing." bigskyarts.org



2ND BIG SKY PBR

A rowdy summer favorite for many, the Outlaw Partners event is distinguished locally as well as nationally. This year, Big Sky PBR won its seventh consecutive award for PBR's Event of the Year. bigskypbr.com

3RD CHRISTMAS STROLL

A long-time celebration continues to raise holiday spirits each year with a combination of sleigh rides, Christmas cookies, visits with Santa and impromptu snowball fights in the snowy streets of Big Sky. This year, the Christmas Stroll experience spanned two evenings in mid-December as festivities were held between two of Big Sky's hubs, Meadow Village and Town Center.

BEST REAL ESTATE AGENCY

1ST BIG SKY SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

In 1992, Cathy Gorman and her husband Tim Cyr opened the Big Sky Sotheby's office after being selected by the national company to forge a presence in Big Sky.

Boasting many long-time local agents who offer treasured inside knowledge to clients, Sotheby's has a strong grasp on the community and what it means to be part of it. Many agents raise children in the community and volunteer to serve on various boards and committees in town. With a conveniently located Town Center office, their door is frequently open with a friendly face waiting to answer questions on the other side. bigskysir.com



TIE FOR SECOND PLACE



2ND L&K REAL ESTATE

L&K Real Estate's mission to provide guidance in real estate for everything from ranch properties to ski-in-ski-out residences has been distinguished as one of the best in town for years as the agency continues to support buyers, sellers and developers in navigating the unique market of Big Sky. lkrealestate.com

2ND BIG SKY REAL ESTATE COMPANY

Big Sky Real Estate, one of the largest real estate firms in Big Sky, specializes in luxury properties and matching buyers not only with the finest land and homes but also the best-suited lifestyle. Bigsky.com

3RD LTD REAL ESTATE

True to its name, Live the Dream operates under the mission of helping people bring to fruition visions of mountain living and all the adventure that comes with it. ltdrealestate.com

BEST INTERIOR DESIGN

1ST ERIKA & COMPANY

After working under the distinguished Montana designer Carole Sisson for 15 years, in 2017 Erika Jennings rebranded her Carole Sisson Designs' satellite Big Sky location as her own Erika & Company Interior Design. In just two short years, Jennings has established a community-favorite firm, prioritizing personal relationships with clients in order to bring out their own unique style in their home through her expertise.

Living in Big Sky for 20 years, Jennings is constantly inspired by the surrounding landscape and outdoor aesthetic of Big Sky, implementing features like Montana moss rock in homes, one of her favorite local stones.

"I love our community," Jennings said. "We have beautiful things and beautiful relationships in the amazing outdoors." erikaandco.com



2ND ALDER AND TWEED

A family business that brings 40 years of experience to the table, Alder and Tweed offers custom service to each client. They aim to exceed expectations with each project, holding their design as well as customer service to a high standard. alderandtweed.com

3RD MELANIE TURNER INTERIORS

Melanie Turner bolsters stunning design work with extensive qualifications. She works to achieve glamorous and classic looks in luxury Big Sky homes while maintaining an essence of simplicity. melanieturnerinteriors.com

BEST FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

1ST FIRST SECURITY BANK

For those who bank with First Security, it's apparent that the welcoming financial institution is far more than what its title suggests. On an average day, patrons strolling up to the counter are often greeted by many smiling faces before reaching their destination.

In addition to warm customer service, First Security employees are known for their enthusiasm, often bringing an element of celebration to a standard errand at the bank. In addition to the annual customer appreciation barbecue, this year First Security Bank celebrated the institution's 100th anniversary with a school-style spirit week, complete with daily costumes and decorations as well as prizes for visitors.

First Security goes above and beyond what it means to be a local bank. "We make it a priority to be a community leader, whether that means by financial support or by volunteering at community events," said Tyler Wheeler, the bank's marketing director. "We take great pride in our Big Sky community." ourbank.com



2ND AMERICAN BANK

When patrons walk into American Bank, they can count on being greeted by friendly faces and the enticing scent of buttery popcorn. Known for their customer service and tasty amenities, American Bank has locals looking forward to running errands at the bank. americanbankmontana.com

3RD YELLOWSTONE BANK

For those who frequently travel up the canyon to Bozeman, Yellowstone Bank is a popular choice. Having opened their doors over a century ago, this financial institution knows what it means to operate a business in Montana and tend to local customers accordingly. yellowstonebank.com

BEST LANDSCAPING

1ST BIG SKY LANDSCAPING

Big Sky Landscaping is proof that more than just glaciers had a hand in configuring this earth. BSL has been in the business of shaping Big Sky for more than 16 years. While they can't quite move mountains—yet—BSL can accommodate nearly any request to landscape your yard.

"It's an honor to be voted the best landscaping company for the second year in a row," said Alan McClain, owner and manager of BSL. "I'm most psyched for my employees," he added. "They are the people out there everyday working hard, being creative and representing us in a professional manner. I'm proud of them for earning us this recognition." bslmt.com



2ND PRECISION LAWN AND SNOW SERVICES

Since 2005, Dale Somerby and his crew at Precision Lawn and Snow Services have been caring for residential and commercial properties and offering top-notch service for all your landscaping needs. (406) 579-2245

3RD 46 NORTH LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN

Approaching their 10th year in the earth moving and shaking business, 46 North Landscape and Design is well equipped to create the tailor-made yard you're looking for. 46northlandscape.com/

BEST PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

1ST TWO PINES PROPERTIES

Two Pines Properties handles more than just the two forms of property management they are known for. Co-owners Wes and Alex Hoecker are heavily involved in the community in various forms. “We say that we want to do business the right way and impact Big Sky on a greater level, so the fact that we’ve been recognized is proof in the pudding that we’re carrying out the goal that we set forth before we started Two Pines,” Wes said.

Whether you seek a vacation rental or a long-term rental option, Two Pines offers what voters have identified as the best property management company in town, not only for those on vacation but for property owners as well. “Our whole entire success is because of a lot of other people, so it means a lot,” Alex said. twopines.com



2ND HAMMOND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

For the past 12 years, Hammond Property Management has come to know the ins and outs of property management in Big Sky, including the heavy lifting like snow removal and maintenance. hpmmontana.com

3RD BIG SKY VACATION RENTALS

Big Sky Vacation Rentals can help with all of your property management needs. Kick back and let them do the work. bookbigsky.com

BEST PIZZA

1ST MILKIES PIZZA & PUB

This might sound cheesy, but it’s no wonder Milkies Pizza & Pub was selected as the best pizza in Big Sky. With more than 25 years of experience in the business, co-owner Van Burton and his staff offer up to 20 toppings to dress up your pie, so the hardest choice may just be deciding which ones you want. Pair a cold beer with a steaming hot pizza made completely from scratch, right in house. Located in Westfork Meadow Plaza, Milkies is your one-stop shop for the top pie in town.

“[Winning] makes me feel pretty good,” Burton said. “I know years ago I was voted best pizza in Big Sky. . . We get a lot of local business in here and they’re the ones that make it go and make this place grow.” milkiespizza.com



2ND OUSEL AND SPUR PIZZA CO.

Ousel and Spur, located in Town Center features exquisite toppings such as elk sausage to distinguish their pizzas from the rest. ouselandspurpizza.com

3RD BLUE MOON BAKERY

Whether it’s slices, scones or a salad you seek, Blue Moon Bakery has you covered for any meal of the day. bigskybluemoonbakery.com

BEST SHOPPING

1ST MONTANA SUPPLY

Montana Supply offers a wide selection of clothing and accessories that exemplify a modern Western chic style. “We’re honored to be chosen among so many other Big Sky businesses,” said Josh Tozier, who co-owns the shop with his wife Alaina Stinson. “We’ll continually strive to provide the best experience for the community and any visitors that come to Big Sky.”

In the conveniently located Town Center location, shoppers readily find selections from their favorite brands and often discover new ones. “Thanks to the loyal customers that saw us from Big Sky Shirt Company to High Country Goods to, what is now, Montana Supply,” Stinson said. Montana Supply has items to cover you head to toe, no matter the season. montanasupplyco.com



2ND TROVE WEST

Trove West has a large selection of local handmade arts and wearable items, as well as gifts. Their abundant choices make the stop well worth it. trovestorewest.com

3RD SHELLY BERMONT FINE JEWELRY

Located in the Meadow Village of Big Sky, Shelly Bermont showcases her stunning original work that is a treat to peruse and admire. shellybermont.com

BEST FISHING OUTFITTER

1ST GALLATIN RIVER GUIDES

Don't be fooled by the name: Gallatin River Guides does much more than simply row your boat. Fishing four rivers in the immediate area for more than three decades, GRG has a feel for where they'll be biting no matter the season.

New to the fishing scene or looking to further your knowledge? GRG hosts the Montana Fishing Guide School and the Montana Women's Fly-Fishing School, as well as offering guided fishing trips all year round. New owner Mike Donaldson has an energized crew set on making your experience as memorable as possible. If you're hooked on fishing, like many voters in the area, GRG can help you set the hook.

“What an honor! This is such a great community and it's awesome knowing we are a part of it,” Donaldson said. “Thanks for the support Big Sky, we couldn't do it without you.” montanaflyfishing.com



2ND EAST SLOPE OUTDOORS

East Slope Outdoors has been a staple in the Big Sky community for 35 years offering guided fly-fishing trips as well as essential gear rentals. eastslopeoutdoors.com

3RD RICK REED

Rick Reed is an experienced and well-known guide in the Big Sky area who owns Reed Guide Service and Outfitting. He'll have you hooked on fly fishing in no time. (406) 579-2792

BEST COFFEE

1ST CALIBER COFFEE

If it's a high-octane cup of coffee you seek, Caliber Coffee is the best around, according to Best of Big Sky voters. With a wide range of drips to sip on, you're sure to indulge in something delightful. Caliber Coffee has two locations throughout Big Sky, one in Westfork Meadows and one along Highway 191.

Caliber owner Stephanie Alexander, who bought and took over the business in 2017, has a professional and dedicated staff to carry out her vision.

"At Caliber, our No. 1 priority is providing a kind and welcoming space to bring people together," said Dani Zaremba, a barista at Caliber. "We treat our customers like family and believe this is the reason the shop has become a staple in our tight-knit community. Winning the Best of Big Sky again is a tribute to the amount of support our community provides. Roasting coffee is the easy part."



2ND HUNGRY MOOSE MARKET AND DELI

Following the recent renovation of the Moose, now is the time to stop in and grab a hot cup of Joe. hungrymoose.com

3RD TOAST

Pop into Toast and grab your morning coffee on the go, or if you have some time, stay a while and enjoy the laid back vibe. toastbigsky.com

BEST HOTEL - BOZEMAN

1ST THE LARK

The Lark may only have been around for four years, but its location has welcomed visitors for more than five decades. The Lark was constructed from the bones of the old "Imperial 400 Motel" that previously occupied the space. In 2015, after significant renovation, the Lark took its place among those in the Bozeman hospitality industry, first in the eyes of voters this year.

"We host a lot of travelers from all over the world, but for the locals to recognize what we do and how much pride we have in it, that means a lot too," said group coordinator Anica Lees, at the Lark, who was echoed by hotel manager Kristen Mann. "It means everything because we truly love Bozeman and we really want everyone to come here." larkbozeman.com



2ND ELEMENT BOZEMAN

Re-create your element at the Element Bozeman Hotel by Westin. If you happen to stop by the comfy confines on East Mendenhall Street in Bozeman, enjoy the comforts of excellence and look for our favorite magazine! marriott.com

Explore

Big Sky

EDITOR'S CHOICE


COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR
MARY AND BRIAN WHEELER

The Wheelers have played instrumental roles in the growth and wellbeing of Big Sky. Serving on numerous boards and committees and volunteering countless hours, the couple has had a heavy hand in nurturing Big Sky into the community it is today. The Wheelers have been residents for 30 years and raised their children in the community.

BEST RESTAURANT
BUCK'S T-4 LODGE

A Big Sky dining mainstay for decades, the EBS editorial team would be remiss not to tap Buck's T-4 Lodge and Restaurant for the Editor's Choice for Best Restaurant. The menu, designed and executed by chef Scott Mechura, eloquently balances gourmet, comfort food and wild game in a cozy space across Highway 191 from the Gallatin River. Here's to many more years of Buck's T-4. buckst4.com


BEST LOCAL MEAL DEAL
MI PUEBLITO TACO BUS

Taco 'bout a deal! Mi Pueblito Taco Bus is one of the newest additions to the Big Sky dining menu. With a spicy and mild selection of authentic Mexican cuisine there's something for everyone. (406) 223-6421


BEST BUSINESS
BIG SKY CONOCO TRAVEL SHOPPE

Going 16 years strong, the Conoco at the corner of Highway 191 and Lone Mountain Trail has been serving weary travelers as well as Big Sky locals. From gas to hunting licenses to firewood, the Conoco has all your on-the-go needs in one location. bigskyconoco.business.site


BEST COFFEE
STEELE PRESSED JUICE

With origins stemming from their days at the Big Sky Farmer's Market, owner Jen Steele has turned her dream into a reality. Now with a kiosk shop in town center, Steele and her staff are serving up delicious smoothies and coffees.


BEST EVENT
PEAK TO SKY

Big Sky is still recovering from the two-night historical Peak to Sky event that brought Rock n' Roll Hall of Famers to play beneath the Big Sky for an unforgettable musical experience last July. Mark your calendars for the next one... peaktosky.com


BEST SHOPPING
LONE PEAK CAREGIVERS

Stopping into one of Lone Peak Caregivers' two locations is always a pleasurable experience. Customers will leave feeling well taken care of. lonepeakcaregivers.net

Explore

Big Sky

BEST ON THE MOUNTAIN


RESTAURANT
THE CABIN BAR AND GRILL

This white tablecloth establishment has been wowing Big Sky Resort patrons for nearly two decades; with a diverse menu sporting everything from mussels steamed in red curry coconut milk to cast-iron seared, bone-in pork chops, The Cabin Bar and Grill is a cut above for on-mountain cuisine. cabinbarandgrill.com


BEST LOCAL MEAL DEAL
YETI DOGS

Hot dog, this was an easy pick. Yeti's is a local hotspot where many people choose to "ketchup" and enjoy their favorite dog. After a day on the mountain this is the perfect place to have a brew and a quick bite.

bigskyresort.com/resort-dining/yeti-dogs

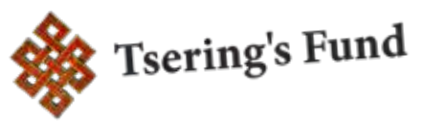
and Grill is a cut above for on-mountain cuisine. cabinbarandgrill.com



Guide to Giving



WINTER 2019-2020



THIS SECTION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Big Sky

Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

L&K Real Estate

HIGHLINE

BIG SKY NONPROFITS

All Saints in Big Sky	allsaintsinbigsky.com
Arts Council of Big Sky	bigskyarts.org
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Gallatin County	bbbs-gc.org
Big Sky Chapel	bigskychapel.com
Big Sky Christian Fellowship	bigskychristianfellowship.com
Big Sky Community Food Bank	bigskyfoodbank.org
Big Sky Community Library	bigskylibrary.com
Big Sky Community Organization	bscomt.org
Big Sky Discovery Academy	bigskydiscoveryacademy.org
Big Sky Futbol Club	bigskyfc.org
Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association, Inc.	bssd72.org
Big Sky Ski Education Foundation	bssha.org
Big Sky Youth Empowerment	bssef.com
Crail Ranch Homestead Museum	bscomt.org/ crail-ranch-homestead-museum
Eagle Mount – Bozeman	eaglemount.org
Friends of Big Sky Education	friendsofbigskyeducation.org
Friends of the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center	mtavalanche.org
Gallatin River Task Force	gallatinrivertaskforce.org
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance	gallatinisa.org
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	greateryellowstone.org
Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center	grizzlywolfdiscoveryctr.org
HATCH	hatchexperience.org
Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter	heartofthevalleyshelter.org
Jack Creek Preserve Foundation	jackcreekpreserve.org
KidsLINK After School Program - Ophir	bssd72.org
Montana Land Reliance	mtlandreliance.org
Montana Wilderness Association	montanamountaineering.org
Morningstar Learning Center	morningstarlearningcenter.org
Rotary Club of Big Sky	bigskyrotary.org
Soldiers Chapel	(406) 995-4089
Spanish Peaks Community Foundation	spanishpeaksfoundation.org
Thrive	allthrive.org
Visit Big Sky	(406) 995-3000
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center	warrenmillerpac.org
Western Sustainability Exchange	westernsustainabilityexchange.org
Women In Action	bigskywia.org
Wortman Lung Cancer Foundation	wortmanlungcancerfoundation.org
Yellowstone Club Community Foundation	yellowstoneclubfoundation.org
Yellowstone Forever	yellowstone.org

There are countless nonprofits in our region, and we couldn't possibly list them all here, but we encourage you to find one that you identify with and feel inclined to support either monetarily or by volunteering.

A Guide to Giving

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – At times, it's easy to forget the end-of-year holidays aren't just about presents under the tree and adding a few obligatory pounds from feasting on roasts, cookies and eggnog.

Gift-giving and giving, for many, extend only to loved ones and family, and around the holidays the two can admittedly become mutually exclusive.

In Big Sky and the surrounding area, many of our neighbors rely on the noble work of nonprofits to provide clothing, education, shelter, food and vocation. So, too, do the health and access points for many of Big Sky's natural splendors rest on the shoulders of nonprofit and volunteer-based organizations.

We at Explore Big Sky hope to bring awareness to such efforts this holiday season, in hopes of inspiring a passion for donating to worthy causes that both directly and indirectly impact us all here Big Sky, Montana.

Inside this Guide to Giving, you'll find information about a wide range of organizations—and how to support them—with interests in protecting what we in the Big Sky community hold dear. You'll also learn about those organizations bent on elevating the fruits of the human spirit.

We invite you to spend a few minutes perusing these pages with the intent of thinking outside the walls of your office or home and outside your network of friends and family so that the joy of giving reaches everyone within our growing community.

The science of charitable donations

BY DOUG NEIL, CPA
NEIL & COMPANY CPAS

Along with the holidays, the end of the year also signifies the time to begin year-end tax planning. One strategy, often a piece of the planning, is charitable giving.

The 2018 tax reform named the "Tax Cut and Jobs Act" included a major overhaul to the tax code, and with it came new ideas and ways to optimize tax strategies including tax deductions for charitable contributions.

The tax reform increased the standard deduction to \$12,000 for Single Filers and \$24,000 for Married Filing Jointly (adjusted to \$12,200 and \$24,400 for 2019). The increase prompted the notion of grouping charitable giving into one year for tax deduction purposes with the ability to then spread out giving over a period of time.

Donor advised funds have been around for several years but have recently become a hot topic in charitable giving conversations—with a DAF, a taxpayer can put a lump sum into a donor advised fund and then have the fund distribute cash to organizations of the individual's choice at his or her own pace. The taxpayer then receives the maximum income tax deduction immediately, even if the assets aren't distributed right away.

Taxpayers looking to exceed the higher standard deduction from the 2018 tax reform can pool several years worth of charitable donations into a single contribution to a DAF. Contributions can be in the form of cash, stocks, mutual funds, real estate and other nonfinancial assets, without incurring capital gains taxes.

Another advantage of a DAF, versus traditional charitable giving, is the idea of organizing charitable giving into one place; essentially eliminating the need to collect receipts since the fund collects and holds all documents for the taxpayer.

When considering giving to causes that are important to you this holiday season, a DAF may be a good tool to work into your year-end tax planning strategies.

Tsering's Fund

PHOTOS BY KENE SPERRY

Each year, as many as 20,000 girls are trafficked out of Nepal and endure unspeakable treatment. But there is hope. Local dentist Peter Schmeiding and his wife Karen Fellerhoff started Tsering's Fund more than a decade ago to educate Nepali children and keep them safe.

The organization and its volunteers have dedicated their lives to this cause and have changed the trajectories of hundreds of children, young women and families in Nepal.

On a recent powerful trip to Nepal, Big Sky photographer Kene Sperry joined the group, which visited a number of schools in various regions of Nepal to document progress and bring supplies, including clothing and shoes.

"Trafficking of young girls in Nepal is an epidemic," said Schmeiding, president of the nonprofit Tsering's Fund. "We feel the best way to help is to sponsor the girls and educate them. Many live so far from schools—too far to walk every day—so they can go to boarding schools."

This holiday season, keep in mind that those with the least often need the most. — *The Editors*



The Jyugal Boarding High School in Chautara, in the Sindhupalchok District of Nepal, sponsors 103 students through Tsering's Fund.



(L-R) Kene Sperry, Andy Holm, Prakash Uprety, Peter Schmeiding, Tsering Dolkar Lama, Mary Grace Wilkus, Bishnu Bhandari

WOMEN IN ACTION

In 2005, a group of Big Sky women came together to create Women in Action, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the needs of our growing community. WIA believes that everyone who calls Big Sky home deserves access, not only to the unparalleled beauty around us, but also the resources that help people lead full and healthy lives through the following four main areas of focus.

Camp Scholarships

In 2019, WIA awarded 65 scholarships to help Big Sky kids whose families demonstrated financial need attend summer camp, winter ski programs and year-round enrichment opportunities. Scholarships are supported through grants from local foundations, individual donors and the proceeds from Harbor's Hero Run, organized by Lone Peak High's National Honor Society.

Behavioral Health

WIA partners with behavioral health providers throughout the Gallatin Valley to provide individual, couple and family mental health therapy, as well as substance use disorder counseling here in Big Sky. These services, which were previously unavailable, are made possible through support from Big Sky Resort Area District, individual donors and local foundations who are committed to removing barriers to access such as high cost of services and transportation limitations, as well as stigma reduction in receiving behavioral health care.

WIA, in partnership with the Montana State University Human Development Clinic (HDC), offers graduate student-level confidential and affordable mental health counseling services for all Big Sky residents. WIA provides office space and a sliding scale for all who are eligible. In 2019, for the first time in our 10-year partnership, two counseling interns were needed to meet the need in our community.

Through our partnership with Alcohol and Drug Services of Gallatin County (ADSGC), WIA provides office space and travel costs for a substance use disorder counselor to provide individual and group therapies, court-mandated treatment and prevention strategies to the Big Sky community. Since the start of 2019, ADSGC has provided 192 hours of client services for our friends and neighbors struggling with substance use issues.

In addition, WIA made services locally available through partnerships with a Licensed Clinical Psychologist who treats adolescents and adults experiencing a range of mental health challenges, as well as a mental health counselor specializing in children and adolescents.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WOMEN IN ACTION

Education

Since its inception, WIA has worked with the Big Sky School District to provide funds in areas where public tax dollars fall short. In 2019, WIA provided a grant for an online English as a second language program, as well as art and music supplies.

Community Enrichment

This year, WIA, along with Haven, Thrive and Girls for a Change offered a healthy relationships and self-defense course for Big Sky's women and girls; WIA and the Arts Council of Big Sky presented MountainFilm for Families—a free screening of family friendly films and a fun arts project for more than 55 kids and parents; and WIA and local stakeholders came together to continue identifying and addressing gaps in behavioral health services.

For information about our services, or how you can help WIA, email Executive Director Jean Behr at jean@wiabigsky.org, or visit bigskywia.org.



BIG SKY COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST

Visioning Big Sky, a community visioning effort, identified affordable housing as the community's most urgent challenge. The vast majority of local employers identify lack of housing options as the most significant problem in their recruitment and retention of workers. Recent reports show over 50 percent of local workers commute daily through the Gallatin Canyon to their jobs in Big Sky because of the shortage of affordable living options in the area.

To ensure good places to live are within the reach of our local workforce, the Big Sky Community Housing Trust is working to increase the supply of both rentals and entry-level housing. Because Big Sky's rents and mortgages are out of sync with wages, the BSCHT is also diligently striving to influence policies that would improve the town's housing situation.

BSCHT is using a community land trust to keep housing units perpetually affordable, and BSCHT homes are sold to qualified applicants at about 30 percent below market rate. In exchange, there is a deed restriction which caps the resale appreciation of the home at 2 percent per year. This ensures the home stays affordable over the years and that the initial subsidy stays with the community, not the first buyer. All BSCHT units must be owner-occupied and cannot be rented out as a short-term rental.

There is a waitlist of families ready to make their first home purchase in Big Sky with BSCHT. To qualify for the program, household income must be less than 150 percent of the area median income, or about \$110,000. At least one person in the household must have worked in Big Sky for at least two years, and buyers must attend the eight hour HRDC Home Buyer Education Class.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST

The MeadowView Condominium project, off Little Coyote Road and behind the softball fields, is the first BSCHT initiative. Eighteen homes in Phase 1 of this project are completed and sold with Phase 2 construction now underway. The average MeadowView purchaser is in their mid-30s and most have worked in Big Sky for over five years, struggling during that time to find a place they can afford to buy and make their home. Seventy five percent of the MeadowView Phase 1 buyers needed down payment assistance, provided through donations to BSCHT, to help them qualify for their home purchase. All these workers provide critical and valuable services to the members and visitors who value Big Sky.

BSCHT is looking to create additional rental opportunities at affordable rates, as not every worker is ready to purchase a home. The long-term rental market for Big Sky locals has decreased dramatically the last few years as short-term rentals have hit record high levels. More units are desperately needed in the long-term rental market.

BSCHT is dedicated to timely implementation of strategies that address these issues. There are opportunities to help by supporting the BSCHT Rent

Local Program, Down Payment Assistance Program or by donating directly to the New Development Fund.

Visit thebrdc.org/big-sky-community-housing-trust/ to make your tax-deductible donation. For more information, contact Program Director Laura Seyfang at (406) 995-3696.



BIG SKY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

The Big Sky Community Food Bank is unlike most other food banks in the US because essentially all its clients are part of the workforce. In Big Sky, many working households struggle to make ends meet as the cost of living increases and the housing market becomes even more challenging. On tight budgets, many neighbors are just one fender-bender or trip to the emergency room away from losing everything. BSCFB exists to bridge the gap when clients are in a food emergency and to help Big Sky become a stable and livable place for all.

BSCFB clients include both year-round essential and seasonal workers, families who have lived here for years and new young professionals hoping to make Big Sky their home. Since opening its doors in 2012, BSCFB has served:

- 2,389 people
- 100 children
- 61 senior citizens
- 5.5% of our clients are veterans of the US armed services

Clients can use the food bank once each month and can choose enough food for a week's supply. Other BSCFB services include a crockpot and cookware exchange for those who do not have full kitchens, warm winter clothing for children and adults, as well as help enrolling in healthcare insurance, tax assistance, referrals for mental and legal help. The food bank rescues unsold produce, dairy and bread products from the grocery stores and bakeries in Big Sky, as well as canned goods from the donation bins around town. BSCFB is aided by canned food drives initiated by the Big Sky schools and community groups, but often have to purchase food from the Montana Food Bank Network.

BSCFB was created as a local effort between the Human Resource Development Council and Big Sky community members. The food bank is open two days a week year-round and is managed by a local employee along with a group of dedicated volunteers and advisory council members.

As Big Sky grows, so will our food bank. BSCFB is looking to partner with local community members and businesses that will commit to support the



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

food bank on a yearly basis. In order to meet the growing demand, BSCFB needs community members to sustain its efforts into the future. Through these partnerships, the BSCFB will help make Big Sky a stable and livable community for all who desire to make Big Sky their home.

The Big Sky Community Food Bank Advisory Council, staff and volunteers would like to thank the community of Big Sky for your generosity in helping us realize our mission. BSCFB clients have expressed their heartfelt gratitude time and again as we meet their needs in times of emergency.

For more information please email sarah@bigskyfoodbank.org or call (406) 995-3088.



BIG SKY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Two hundred and fifty-plus volunteers; 93 acres of public parks and 19 miles of public trails and counting: this is Big Sky Community Organization in a nutshell.

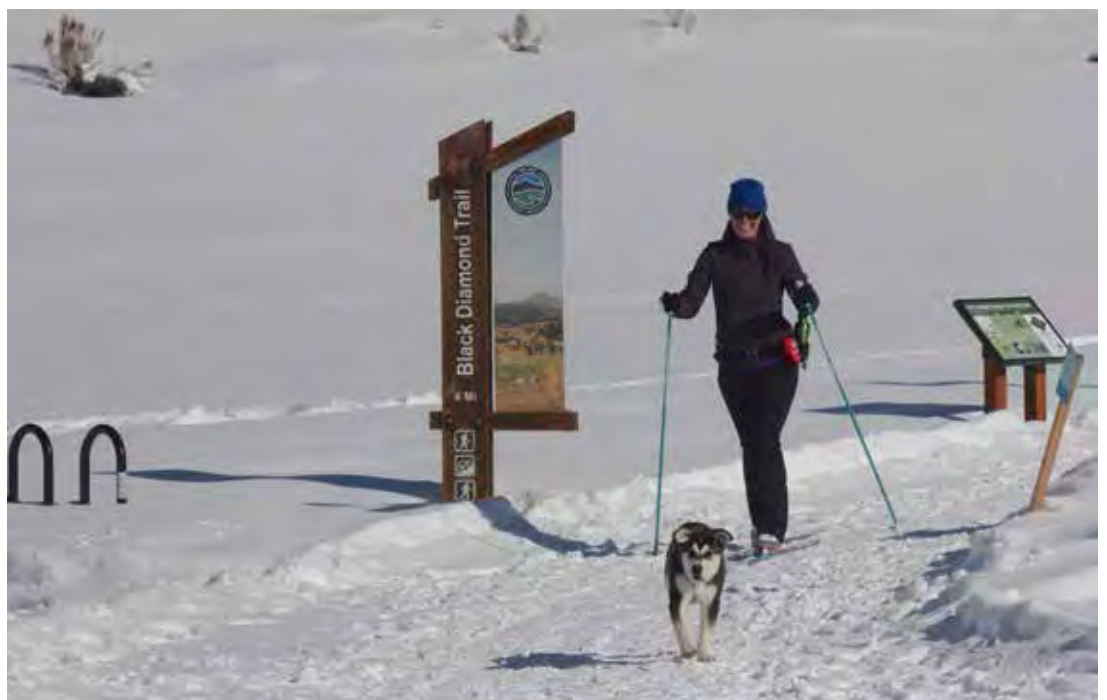
BSCO has been connecting people with recreational and enrichment opportunities since 1998 thanks to the generous support of the Big Sky community and town we call home.

From making much needed improvements to the Upper Beehive Basin trailhead, to purchasing 3.3 acres of new parkland in Town Center, implementing our Master Trails Plan, starting a network of groomed multi-use winter trails, and breaking ground on BASE—Big Sky's first community center—we, the community and BSCO, have done a lot together.

BSCO has set some sky-high goals for 2020 based on what you, our community members, have asked for, including new pedestrian and bike trails and pathways, with four connections planned for a total of nearly 10 miles of new trail. Better access to our public lands, with a major trailhead renovation and expansion planned for the beloved Ousel Falls. Not to mention, more parkland, fields and space for future indoor recreation.

Thank you for your continued support to keep Big Sky a place where trails and parks provide beautiful vistas, space for wildlife and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to play and connect.

To donate and learn more about BSCO, call (406) 993-2112 or visit bscomt.org.



Enjoying BSCO's Big Sky Community Park, an ideal location for the young and the young at heart to gather and play – summer, winter, and all times in-between. Encompassing 44 total acres, there is plenty of space to enjoy a variety of activities, from walking your dog and riding a bike to cross country skiing and snowshoeing. The park also features a playground, basketball court, skate park, pump track, climbing boulders, tennis & pickle ball courts, softball and multi-use fields, disc golf course, and fishing access. PHOTO BY LOVE STREET MEDIA.



GALLATIN RIVER TASK FORCE

Listen to Montana and you hear its rivers—and we in Big Sky listen to the Gallatin.

With chop and splash as it moves over rocks and the walls of its canyon, it is our lifeline. The Gallatin is a river that provides water for seven communities from Yellowstone National Park to the mighty Missouri; to towns like Big Sky, growing at a rapid rate. This river holds so much in its waters, including our stories, such as the days we spend wading within its cold embrace throwing cast after cast in hopes of a taut line and glistening trout. Exhilaration mounts paddling through rapids, getting bounced, wet and shaken. The Gallatin River shares our stories, and the Gallatin River Task Force listens, working to safeguard its headwaters for generations to come.

The Gallatin has drifted through our history, and it continues to flow with promises for Big Sky's future. It's an artery joining generations of families, friends and communities. The community needs it to live and to thrive—it's drinking water, an engine for our economy that simultaneously provides habitat for fish and wildlife in our region; it's a balm to the human soul. Just saying the word "river" makes a person feel good.

The Gallatin runs through our home and our hearts and it needs protection in the face of a growing population, warming temperatures and heavy usage. Safeguarding the waters of the Gallatin requires energy, volunteerism and financial support. The GRTF needs your help as it takes the lead to steward and safeguard Big Sky's beloved waterway.

The GRTF asks for your end-of-year donation, support, and stewardship to ensure that the organization can mitigate threats facing the watershed, including future algae blooms.

The Gallatin watershed remains vital today because of your sustained partnership, and the impact of that has been truly profound. Your contribution will further benefit aquatic health, river and streambank restoration, and conservation, and you should expect to hear more from us as the GRTF



PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLATIN RIVER TASK FORCE

expresses its deep gratitude for your on-going involvement and investment in the organization's programs and successes.

Patagonia Matching Donation Opportunity: *Help spread the word that Patagonia will match any donations to the Task Force through their donation portal until Dec. 31 up to \$10,000 per donation, until their total giving has reached \$10 Million Dollars. Visit patagonia.com/actionworks and type in Gallatin River Task Force or Big Sky, Montana.*

We are a 501c3 | TAX ID: 74-3127146.

Visit gallatinrivertaskforce.org for more information.



WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Warren Miller Performing Arts Center opened its doors on March 12, 2013 through a collaborative effort of the Big Sky Community, Friends of Big Sky Education and the Big Sky School District.

The WMPAC's mission is to establish and maintain a clear and stable artistic infrastructure to grow a community of confident performers and inspired audiences.

The WMPAC team brings creative vision to the stage in Big Sky through presenting both world-class acts and local performers. Located on the campus of Lone Peak High School, our 280-seat venue creates an intimate experience, with dynamic sound and up-close visuals that draw in audience members and engage the senses.

Over the past seven years, WMPAC has brought 875 national and international performers to the stage, including the Kronos Quartet, Ira Glass, Tig Notaro, Billy Collins, Vanessa Williams, Reggie Watts, Edgar Meyer, The Crossing and more. More importantly, WMPAC has hosted over 4,000 local performers through annual community theater productions, Big Sky Broadway and Big Sky Broadway Junior, the latter two of which give local children as young as five their chance in the spotlight.

WMPAC is best known for its annual winter season headliners, when WMPAC presents eight performances between December and March. During the summer, the theater provides a venue to incubate new artworks, including theater and dance. This fall, WMPAC launched a three-show mini-season specifically designed for local families, which smashed all previous fall attendance records and verified that Big Sky is engaged with the arts.

As a nonprofit, WMPAC relies on the generosity and support of our community to continue providing the type of world-class arts experiences the WMPAC team prides itself on. A performing arts center in Big Sky diversifies the ski town experience, providing opportunities for more community gatherings that complement the community's incredible recreational opportunities. Supporting WMPAC means supporting a fundamental creative outlet for our growing community, one which unites all through shared stories and experiences.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The cost of bringing in outside performers is graciously subsidized by sponsors and donations. This ensures that WMPAC is able to bring in the highest quality artists to inspire our audiences, as well as professional directors and resources to guide local performers to their best performances when it's their turn on stage. Donations also go towards offsetting the ticket cost. The arts are for everyone, and it's WMPAC's priority to keep prices affordable for the entire Big Sky community.

Supporting WMPAC means keeping tickets accessible for the whole community, providing interesting, relevant, meaningful work and supporting a cultural ecosystem that puts community building at the forefront.

For more information, visit us at warrenmillerpac.org, or call us at (406) 995-6345.

WARREN MILLER™
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

BIG SKY SEARCH AND RESCUE

Living in the Big Sky area means taking part in the myriad outdoor activities that make this area a covetable destination. Whether one is an avid hunter, hiker, skier, snowmobiler, angler, white water rafter or mountain biker, there's always something worth heading outdoors for.

That being said, all of those activities have their inherent dangers: cue Big Sky Search and Rescue.

Big Sky Search and Rescue is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit community organization staffed by a dedicated group of 30 volunteers. When needed, BSSR is called through the Gallatin County Dispatch (911) and responds with expertise and equipment under the direction of the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office.

The BSSR is anticipating that 2020 will be yet another big year for dispatches as the number of people visiting and moving to Big Sky continues to increase.

In 2018 BSSR responded to over 30 calls to assist people that had been injured or lost when recreating in the Big Sky area—the primary response area is the mountains and valleys around Big Sky, which include the Gallatin and Madison mountain ranges and the drainages of the Gallatin River.

Most BSSR rescues are in response to some form of injury requiring BSSR's teams to provide emergency medical care, and BSSR often responds to said calls using a variety of different equipment such as snowmobiles, side-by-sides, litters for hand carry, ropes, rigging and skis.

Not all of the BSSR's important work is emergency-borne, as it also provides volunteers to help with local events such as The Rut, Big Sky Biggie and skiing events, among others.

Being a member of the BSSR team is a rewarding, yet demanding, experience requiring a commitment to responding to calls for help—no matter what is happening in one's personal life when paged. The time of day or night, weather conditions and other factors are non negotiable. When someone needs us, the BSSR responds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY SEARCH AND RESCUE

Those duties also require a dedication to physical training, which the team does on a monthly basis, minimum.

This past year has been a learning experience of sorts for all BSSR members—with an influx of people came a wide variety of incidents. And even the most skilled outdoorsman can have an “off day.”

The BSSR encourages always packing overnight outdoor necessities, as well as bear spray. The local terrain can be unforgiving, but the BSSR does its best—as a close-knit unit—to ensure everyone makes it home at the end of the day.

A donation to Big Sky Search and Rescue supports efforts to provide current and relevant training for its members, as well as to maintain equipment in a state of readiness.

Visit bssar.org for more information.



HEART OF THE VALLEY

Are you thinking about adding a pet to your family? Then we at the Heart of the Valley, which last year alone found new homes for over 2,100 homeless dogs and cats, encourage adopting from the HOV facility.

Each year, HOV cares for thousands of lost and homeless animals until they can go home. Animals just like Crash, the happiest, most adventurous kitten! When Crash came to HOV as a six-week-old stray, the HOV team knew it would need to find a very special home for him. Crash has a neurological disorder that affects his balance and the movement in back legs. He's also blind.

On the surface, one wants to feel sorry for little Crash—life has certainly thrown several curve balls at him. But once one meets him, one quickly realizes that nothing slows him down. The couple that adopted him had experience with special needs animals, and when they brought him home, they planned to slowly introduce him to his new home environment, letting him get to know one room at a time. But, of course, Crash had other plans. He figured out how to climb the baby gate, and then taught himself how to go down the stairs and back up again.

He loves to run across the room, only stopping when he finds a wall—hence the name Crash. Don't worry—he's taught himself to put his paws out in front of him to find obstacles.

Crash quickly made friends with all of the other dogs and cats in the house, but his very best friend and constant companion is his sister Betty, a deaf pit bull mix. Even though Crash can't see her, they manage to find a way to play together, jumping and running through the house, having a great time.

Crash reminds us that no matter what life throws at us, we can persevere and enjoy life on our own terms. At the shelter, the HOV team is grateful for the opportunity to care for and find homes for thousands of animals each year and to serve as a resource for the community.

In return, HOV relies on community support to operate the shelter. Hundreds of volunteers give thousands of hours of service each year to help care for animals and provide outreach and education. The majority of HOV's annual funding comes



PHOTO COURTESY OF HEART OF THE VALLEY ANIMAL SHELTER

from the generosity of donors who believe in its mission and have a passion for helping animals and giving back to their community.

HOV is proud to serve the Madison and Gallatin valleys and hope to inspire a visit the shelter to learn how to get involved!

This holiday season, please consider a donation to Heart of the Valley to help the team continue its lifesaving work.

Visit heartofthevalleyselter.org for more information.



GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is one of the most iconic and beloved natural areas on Earth. Home to the world's first national park and a remarkable diversity of fish and wildlife, the Greater Yellowstone is one of the last intact ecosystems in the planet's temperate zones. It is also the traditional homeland of indigenous peoples who have been here since time immemorial and maintain deep connections to the region's lands, waters and wildlife.

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition's mission is to work with people to protect the lands, waters and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem now and for future generations. The GYC's vision is a healthy and intact Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem where critical lands and waters are adequately protected, wildlife is managed in a thoughtful, sustainable manner, and a strong, diverse base of support is working to conserve and sustain this special place as part of a larger, connected Northern Rocky Mountain Region.

Learn more about what we do at greateryellowstone.org. Together, we all can make a difference for Greater Yellowstone.



Pronghorn photo: copyright Cindy Goeddel.



FRIENDS OF BIG SKY EDUCATION

As one of the oldest local non-profits in Big Sky, Friends of Big Sky Education is primarily a volunteer organization that promotes education and culture. Through the community's generosity, FOBSE has helped construct and expand programs and infrastructure that are key community pillars. Its our mission: "A Better School Builds A Better Community." Here are a few of FOBSE's most valued and extensive projects.

Lone Peak High School

Along with the community, FOBSE recently celebrated a landmark birthday for Lone Peak High School, FOBSE's first initiative. Ten years after the school's opening, many residents can't imagine Big Sky without a high school; FOBSE led the initiative by facilitating community conversation, advocating for a required state statute change, and then supporting the school board's local balloting.

More than a decade ago, the school district's bonding capacity would not cover all construction costs to build the high school. FOBSE stepped up and coordinated community giving totaling \$2.5 million.

LPHS educates Big Sky teenagers in their own community through exemplary programming, which helps families remain in Big Sky to populate the local workforce. Ninety percent of LPHS graduates pursue post-secondary study, many of whom are accepted into highly competitive colleges. LPHS is a certified International Baccalaureate school, and our students' ACT scores rank among the top in the state.

Warren Miller Performing Arts Center

What can a school district do with a non-regulation size obsolete gym? In Big Sky the gym was recycled for repurposing as a performing arts center to support students' interests and talents. Once again, FOBSE led the initiative through capital campaigning and designing this key community infrastructure.

Since 2013, the WMPAC honors the legendary filmmaker, Warren Miller, who blended skiing with the arts, and connects high-caliber professional artists with our community and our classrooms.

Community Scholarship Program

Our Community Scholarship Program is a conduit for local businesses, organizations and individuals to support LPHS graduates who continue to study after high school. In the last five years, FOBSE has helped 72 LPHS graduates with expenses by awarding more than \$270,000 in scholarships.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Through the scholarship program, FOBSE helps to promote a "culture of scholarship" and provides an opportunity for the community to tell graduates that we are proud of them.

Superintendent's Fund

FOBSE is the fiscal agent for donations to the Superintendent's Fund. These contributions augment tax dollars to support exemplary programs that educate our students at the peak of excellence. Donations to the Superintendent's Fund help the district toward sustaining long-term strategic visions and plans, including professional development.

We invite you to pitch in to build a better school and a better community by volunteering for or contributing to a FOBSE initiative. Contact Loren Bough at lorenbough@me.com or Anne Marie Mistretta at annemariemist@gmail.com, or send an email to info@friendsofbigskyeducation.org.

To donate, visit fobsedonate.org.



BIG SKY SKI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Big Sky Ski Education Foundation has provided the area youth a variety of competitive Alpine, Freeride, and Nordic ski programs since 1993. As a non-profit, volunteer-based organization, BSSEF's mission is to provide an opportunity for kids to become great skiers and pursue personal goals while promoting good sportsmanship, healthy competitiveness, sound technical skills and an appreciation for the spirit of skiing in the mountains. Participants in BSSEF's programs range from young skiers learning the fundamentals of skiing to more experienced freeriders and racers. Over the years, BSSEF programs have grown to include up to 175 total participants in the Alpine, Freeride and Nordic programs, the majority of which live full time in Big Sky. The rest are part time residents of Big Sky that live elsewhere in Montana including Bozeman, Billings and Helena.

As a non-profit organization, BSSEF strives to provide programming at prices that are achievable to all families. However, the program fees do not fully fund the annual budget, so BSSEF relies on its team sponsors, local grants, cash donations, and annual fundraising events to make up the difference, providing scholarship funds to those who need it.

The BSSEF Alpine ski racing team consistently dominates the USSA Northern division, winning the Youth Ski League (YSL) Championships Team award year after year. Additionally, BSSEF regularly has individual racers competing at the top level in their age groups.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 season there has been a renewed focus on growing our Nordic ski programs. BSSEF has two levels of Nordic programming—a Recreational team and a Competitive team. The Rec team focuses on teaching kids the skills they need to build a good foundation and have fun in classic and skate skiing. The Competitive team is a more serious group of kids interested in competing in Nordic Racing and Biathlon with a strong focus on aerobic fitness and technique. Many of BSSEF's competitive racers will be traveling around the western region to compete in events in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Utah.

In recent years, the largest area of growth in BSSEF programs has been in its Freeride Competition program. With Big Sky Resort serving as their backyard, BSSEF athletes are almost guaranteed to be a dominating force in the freeride competition



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY SKI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

world. In just about every freeride competition the BSSEF team has attended, the organization has numerous athletes on the podium in various age groups for both boys and girls. The program emphasizes a strong focus on fitness and nutrition to fuel the extreme skiing they do while training. They not only regularly ski the steepest terrain off the tram, but they hike the Headwaters Ridge and work on honing their "jump" skills to increase the level of difficulty in their competition runs.

Visit bssef.com for more information.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GALLATIN VALLEY

Are you sitting at home in Big Sky while reading about local nonprofits? If you are somewhere else, do you have a home to go to this evening? Is it warm and safe? Can you afford to live there and still put food on the table?

Unfortunately, having a safe, decent and affordable home is not something that everyone in the Big Sky community enjoys. As a matter of fact, a recent community survey found that 74 percent of respondents in Gallatin County said affordable housing was their top concern.

Habitat for Humanity is on a mission to address that concern and create a world where everyone has a decent place to live, and Habitat for Humanity of Gallatin Valley partners with people in Gallatin, Park and Madison counties to help them build or improve a place they can call home.

The immediate benefit of these projects is creating affordable homes for hardworking families in our communities. The long-term accomplishments are much broader—stable housing allows employees to stay in the community, leading to a consistent workforce and thriving economy. Working with families to purchase homes also increases the tax base in these communities, leading to an ongoing investment into community needs.

Homeownership opportunities create pathways for families to thrive. Children of homeowners are 19 percent more likely to graduate from high school and twice as likely to attend college. Additionally, 74 percent of Habitat homeowners across the nation said their families' overall health had improved since moving into their home.

Who can qualify for a Habitat home?

Partner families are not given homes for free but instead purchase their home with an affordable mortgage, as the typical Habitat partner family is steadily employed but not able to qualify for a traditional mortgage. HFHGV has worked with veterans, chefs, social workers, teachers and business managers: the people who form the backbone of our working community.

What are the requirements to be a Habitat partner family?

Partner families must demonstrate the ability to pay the mortgage, put in 500 hours of sweat equity and participate in homeownership and financial education courses.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GALLATIN VALLEY

What is Habitat for Humanity of Gallatin Valley currently working on?

HFHGV is currently repairing homes in all three counties, building two duplexes in Belgrade and two triplexes in Big Sky. The Big Sky build is a partnership between HFHGV and the Big Sky School District—through that partnership, HFHGV is building two triplexes to affordably house Big Sky's teachers and faculty, and this project will allow teachers to remain in the community, leading to more consistent educational opportunities for the children of Big Sky.

To donate, volunteer or learn more, please visit habitatbozeman.org.



AMERICAN RIVERS

American Rivers protects wild rivers, restores damaged rivers, and conserves clean water for people and nature. American Rivers' roots date back to 1973 when a small group of passionate river advocates in Denver ponied up a few hundred bucks to form a new group dedicated to saving the nation's last remaining wild rivers from being dammed. Some 80,000 dams had already been built across the U.S., and dozens more were being proposed. Among the rivers in the crosshairs were the Yellowstone in Montana, the Teton in Idaho, and the Stanislaus in California.

American Rivers has come a long way since then—from a scrappy grassroots organization comprised entirely of volunteers, the organization has grown to become the nation's largest river conservation organization with more than 275,000 members, supporters and volunteers and an annual budget of over \$20 million. American Rivers has spearhead efforts to add 13,000 river miles to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, removed more than 200 obsolete dams, and cleaned up more than 25 million pounds of trash from America's waterways.

In 2016, *Outside Magazine* recognized American Rivers, declaring the organization among "the 6 best environmental groups to donate to for a better world."

While American Rivers is headquartered in Washington, DC, the majority of its team works in field offices across the country. That combination allows American Rivers to influence river policy at the highest levels of government while also conducting grassroots campaigns in its highest-priority local geographies. American Rivers' Northern Rockies office based in Bozeman has four full-time staff committed to protecting the most cherished wild rivers in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Since American Rivers opened its doors on Bozeman's Main Street a decade ago, the organization has played an instrumental role in winning the following victories:

- Won permanent protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for 415 miles of the Snake River and its tributaries surrounding Jackson Hole, Wyoming (2009);
- Saved Wyoming's Hoback River from industrial-scale gas drilling in its headwaters (2013);
- Permanently protected the North Fork Flathead River watershed in Montana and British Columbia from all new mining and energy development (2014);
- Stopped two proposed dams on the Upper Green River in Wyoming (2015);
- Won permanent protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for East Rosebud Creek, marking Montana's first new Wild and Scenic river in 42 years (2018)



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMERICAN RIVERS

Currently, American Rivers' Northern Rockies office's highest priority is winning permanent protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for more than 600 miles of Montana's most storied rivers, including the public lands reaches of the Gallatin, Madison, Yellowstone and Smith. Some of American Rivers' other major campaigns include protecting the Smith River from a proposed copper mine in its headwaters, and removing four low-value dams on the lower Snake River to restore Idaho's legendary wild salmon and steelhead runs.

For more information or to donate, please visit americanrivers.org or contact Scott Bosse, Northern Rockies Director, at sbosse@americanrivers.org.



ARTS COUNCIL BIG SKY

Many Big Sky residents and visitors know the Arts Council of Big Sky from the Music in the Mountains free concert series, one of the most popular community events in Big Sky. But did you know that this is only a small part of what the ACBS does?

From educational outreach to public art, the ACBS is the leading community arts organization in Big Sky. The council wants to ensure that as Big Sky grows, the arts play a central role in community development. Big Sky is lucky in that our town is still being created, and community members still have the rare chance to define what is important as we move forward. The ACBS been around for 30 years and never resting on its laurels—the organization wants to be out in front, leading by example.

This past year was a defining one for the ACBS' public art program. The council recently installed the first outdoor, public sculpture in the state by renowned Montana artist Deborah Butterfield. A signature piece that will draw visitors from all over, "Winter" anchors the newly constructed Town Center Plaza in front of the Wilson Hotel. The ACBS also installed a beautiful reclaimed bison sculpture from Bozeman artist Kirsten Kainz, titled "Waldoza," in Town Center's Fire Pit Park. The council also finished wrapping six utility boxes with local artwork as part of our annual Community Wrap Project, installed Jim Dolan sculptures at the Ousel Falls trailhead and in the Town Center, and installed *Continuity*, by Robert Winslow, in the Town Center. This is all part of the organization's Public Art Master Plan, which is a multiyear project that identifies key locations around the community where public art can play a role.

ACBS education and outreach efforts continue to expand throughout the community. This past year the council offered three different painting workshops featuring well-known Western artists. The ACBS's ARTventure program offers Lone Peak High School students in grades 9-11 a chance to participate in engaging arts field trips, and creates a safe, artistic activity zone at our summer concerts that in 2019 alone served more than 1,200 younger kids. Each year the organization also brings an Artist-in-Residence to the local schools, who works with Big Sky's students on a variety of creative projects.

In addition to Music in the Mountains, the ACBS also produces the annual Big Sky Classical Music Festival, hosts a free performance of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, offers a weekend of documentaries as part of Mountainfilm in Big Sky, and creates one of the most exciting arts events in the region at our annual Auction



THE ELDERS BAND PHOTO BY RICH ADDICKS

for the Arts fundraiser gala. Finally, the ACBS offers selected classical programs through our Schwer-Toepffer Memorial Fund, the annual Madrigal Dinner holiday event, and occasional programs at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center—like International Guitar Night, coming again in March of 2020.

The ACBS could not do any of this without the support of individuals, businesses, local community foundations, and the Big Sky Resort Area District. The council also receives funding from state and national agencies, helping validate that what we do is important not only in Big Sky, but in Montana and beyond.

To find out more about the Arts Council, please visit bigskyarts.org.



MONTANA LAND RELIANCE

Montana is an extraordinary place in every sense of the word. As more and more people discover Montana, the protection of the open spaces and special places that have drawn us all here is increasingly important.

The Montana Land Reliance partners with private landowners to permanently protect these lands, including fish and wildlife habitat, open space, and local and sustainable food production.

MLR has conserved over one million acres in Montana, leaving a lasting legacy of protected land for generations to come. MLR's conservation easements protect valuable open space and wildlife habitat, buffer public land and enhance landscapes for tourism, all factors that contribute to protecting the character of our community and the integrity of the ecosystem in which we live.

Such conservation work is particularly important in southwest Montana because private lands contain disproportionately significant habitat, and are not only crucial for Montana's wildlife and water quality but also for



PHOTO BY ALEXIS BONOGOFSKY

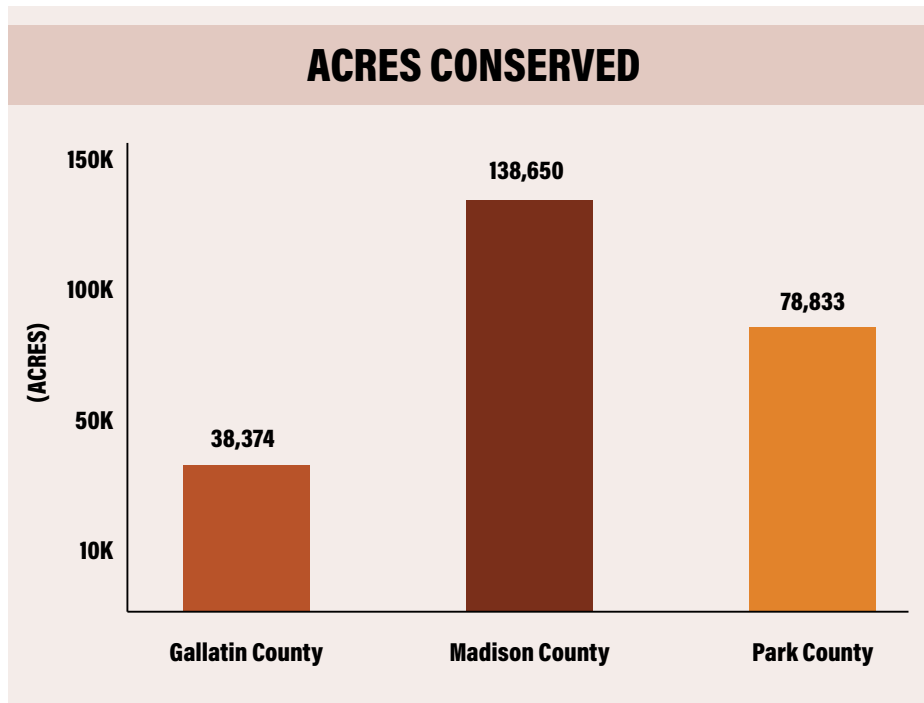
the residents of this beautiful region. Conservation easements provide ecosystem services such as air and water filtration that benefit areas like Big Sky's by mitigating the effects of its growing infrastructure. Big Sky has one of the strongest economies in the state—the views, habitat, access to outdoors and open lands are fueling that success.

Please join MLR in ensuring Montana's water and wildlife, agricultural heritage, and open spaces are protected for generations to come. For more information regarding MLR's programs, events or volunteer opportunities, or to show support for MLR through a donation, please visit mtrandreliance.org or call Jessie Wiese at (406) 594-1570.

Join us Dec. 18, at Green Drinks Bozeman, where we are partnering with Montana-made Duckworth Clothing to celebrate the holiday season—37 East Main Street, Bozeman.



Visit mtrandreliance.org for more information.



WOMEN IN ACTION

Women In Action is committed to improving behavioral health in Big Sky by providing access to substance use disorder and mental health counseling through partnerships with providers from across the Gallatin Valley.

In 2017, WIA were asked to focus on increasing awareness of these services among young people living and working in Big Sky. Through outreach to employees at the Hungry Moose Market & Deli, and conversations with Lone Peak High students about their concerns around behavioral health, the organization learned how it could best reach them with its messaging, and what kinds of images would capture their attention.

Together, the community and WIA created the Never Alone on Lone Peak campaign. This print and digital marketing campaign was directed at the young people in the Big Sky community with the goal of helping them find the behavioral health resources they may need, the ability to support their friends who may be struggling, preventing suicide by highlighting local services and reducing stigma around seeking behavioral health services.

This campaign was made possible through incredible community support. Local photographer, Ryan Turner, donated his stunning photograph of "Lone Peak at Sunset" for the backdrop, and the Hungry Moose, Yellowstone Club Community Foundation and Resort Tax Board provided funding.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WOMEN IN ACTION

Together, the Big Sky community and WIA proved that we are truly Never Alone on Lone Peak.

Visit bigskywia.org for more information on getting involved.



FAMILY PROMISE OF GALLATIN VALLEY

Family Promise of Gallatin Valley is dedicated to providing shelter to homeless families with children and assisting them to develop and implement lasting solutions to their unique situations. Between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019 FPGV engaged 28 families with intensive case management through our rotational sheltering, aftercare and transitional housing programs. FPGV does this through three key programs:

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) and Day Center

Family Promise is a network of interfaith organizations which provide a place for homeless families to sleep, complete with healthy meals and compassionate hospitality during a 90-day program. During this time, staff work with our guests to develop a Family Permanency Plan which will include finding or maintaining employment, sourcing and providing affordable, quality childcare, and locating a sustainable place to live. During the day, FPGV families are provided access to our Day Center to apply for jobs, cook meals, wash clothes or spend quality time together.

Moving Mountains After Care Program

FPGV is committed to providing support and services to families after they graduate from the IHN program. One of the organization's main focuses is to help families engage in the local community and navigate the hurdles in their road to self-sufficiency, while celebrating their successes and achievements with incentives.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing provides families with the opportunity to stay in our housing for up to two years. While all families start off paying a below-market rate of \$300, rent increases over the length of their 2-year stay. This is a great method for families to establish savings, create a positive rental history, pay off debts, and establish goals to break down the barriers of their past.



For a testimonial of our services, read the following story from one of our clients:



The winter of 2018 changed our family forever. It was during the season of giving that found us homeless and struggling. We knew our kids deserved better. We knew we could do better.

The following week we found Family Promise, or rather, Family Promise found us.

With two kids and another on the way, the fear for their future outweighed the fear and embarrassment of our situation. We needed help, we needed guidance.

Family Promise helped our family in more ways than I ever imagined possible.

Garland found a better job and Family Promise gifted him the clothes and tools he needed to continue his hard work. We completed a finance class and Garland is just a few classes away from being completely done with his court obligations.

Our most exciting accomplishment Family Promise helped us with was moving into transitional housing before welcoming our third baby, Gavin. Family Promise helped us with getting our collections and hospital bills taken care of, along with so many other things.

Mackenzie is now doing well in third grade at Longfellow Elementary and Grayson is in preschool. I just applied to MSU for their bookkeeping program through the Gallatin College.

Our family is so grateful for Family Promise and our many adventures ahead that are possible because of their support and guidance.

– Melissa

This holiday season please consider a donation to Family Promise of Gallatin Valley. Visit familypromisegv.org to learn more about Family Promise of Gallatin Valley.

SOUTHWEST MONTANA MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION

The mission at Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association is to enhance access to trails and advocate for mountain bicyclists in southwest Montana. By engaging and educating the community, working with public-land managers, collaborating with other user groups, and building and maintaining trails, SWMMBA is fulfilling that mission.

SWMMBA serves southwest Montana through several initiatives, such as the following.

Gallatin Forest Partnership

The Gallatin and Madison ranges serve as the region's wild backyard, a rugged area that includes the Porcupine Basin that borders Big Sky. These public lands provide vital resources to the Big Sky community, including important undeveloped open spaces and trails that attract business to southwest Montana. As more people move to Montana and explore these places, more conflict is being created between people and wildlife. This agreement provides all of us—people and wildlife—trails and streams and places in the Gallatin and Madison ranges to explore and thrive.

Copper City Trails Project

Located just over an hour north of Big Sky, Copper City Trails offers a rich Montana experience. This project was made possible through a partnership between SWMMBA and the Bureau of Land Management. The project has over 20 miles of bike-optimized trails, open to cyclists, hikers, and trail runners. Copper City encompasses a wide range of trails including beginner-friendly trails, flow trails, and two downhill-only bicycle-only trails. There is a new youth-focused skills park that serves all ages and abilities. As of September 2019, after just three short years of construction, the Copper City Trails Project is officially complete.

Caring for Local Trails

SWMMBA's volunteers maintain and clear trails across southwest Montana. Among the 500-plus miles of trail throughout the region, this year SWMMBA's volunteers assisted in maintaining both the North Fork trail and the Mountain to Meadow trail in Big Sky.

Voice in Numbers

This past spring SWMMBA launched its free membership with the goal of reaching 2020 members by 2020. Attracting a greater number of members brings greater representation to cyclists who value trail opportunities in Big Sky and southwest



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Montana. Since launching free membership in March 2019, SWMMBA boasts over 1,600 members.

Advocacy and Education

SWMMBA's volunteers organize, research, communicate and facilitate the protection of access to Public Lands. SWMMBA offers a number of educational seminars throughout the year and regularly reaches more than 5,000 individuals in the region.

The Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association plays a vital role in building and maintaining trails in southwest Montana. Contributions will support advocacy and education for cyclists throughout southwest Montana, as well as building and maintaining local trails, and providing activities that foster a healthy and engaged Big Sky community.

For more information or to donate, visit southwestmontanamba.org or call at (406) 219-4032.

