

Big Sky

Feb. 12 - 25, 2021
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**Cross-county
vaccine distribution**

Big Sky schools return to classroom

Local hockey, ice sports gain traction

Safety first:
Big Sky's new avy beacon park

Finding snow at Grand Targhee



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ON THE COVER:

Jasper Dodd races to the puck with the Big Sky offense in tow as a Bozeman defender closes in during a friendly hockey game against Bozeman on Feb. 6 in Town Center. PHOTO BY MATT DODD

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Finding snow at Grand Targhee

Just three hours south and a mountain range away from Big Sky, Grand Targhee Resort offers up fresh, endless powder, Wyoming brews and a cozy, local feel.

Opening Shot



Discovery's Middle School students completed their American Red Cross CPR & First Aid Certification Course with Jolt CPR on Feb. 9 in connection with their current theme study. Discovery students are studying geography and weather by answering the guiding question: how can we survive in extreme conditions? PHOTO BY NOAH FISHER

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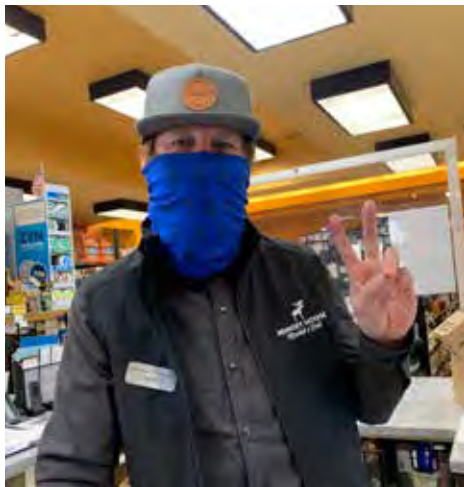
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25 TOWN CENTER AVENUE | 145 TOWN CENTER AVENUE | 66 MOUNTAIN LOOP ROAD | 181 CLUBHOUSE FORK



President’s Day is a time of patriotic celebration and remembrance. What aspect of American democracy are you grateful for right now?



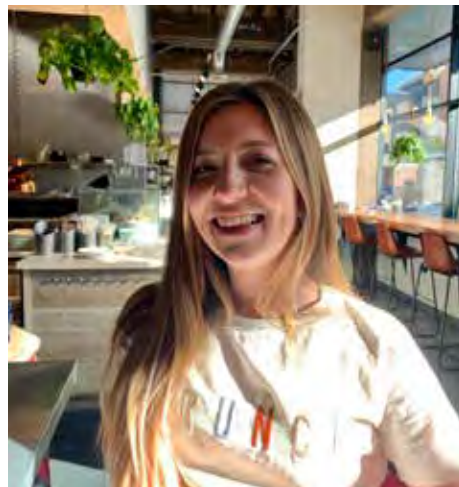
Rob Ezell
Big Sky, Montana

“I’m most thankful for the Constitution because it provides everyday citizens [with] rights and privileges.”



Lauren Bredemeier
Rehoboth, Massachusetts

“I’m truly grateful for my right to vote and to take part in the democratic system.”



Emma LaRue
New York City

“I’m grateful that we’re slowly breaking down barriers to voting rights such as literacy tests in order to increase the accessibility to vote and helping everyone have a say in who represents our government.”



Garrett Kemberling
Big Sky, Montana

“As a United States citizen and an avid outdoorsman and hunter, I am grateful for the Second Amendment and the right to bear arms.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Climate crisis

To the Editor:

Earth’s climate is at a critical point. And I believe the scientists who estimate that we have 10 years to save the planet as we know it. Contrary to the pessimist’s point of view, we can at least slow the process way down.

Yes, we need to change our nasty little habits: we have to manage our power supply. The new technology and economy are here and working. The workforce in alternative energy (solar, wind, geothermal and tides) is increasing daily. We must leave fossil fuels in the ground.

We can do little things right now: turn off the lights as you leave the room; turn off the TV; use motion detectors for outside security lights; and buy those solar panels for your roof.

The most important thing to invest in is renewables. I live in a modest Gallatin Valley home and have been off the grid for 20 years. I know we can live without coal, the main contributor of CO2 emissions and cause for global warming. Many coal-fired power plants have been shut down across the nation, and units 1 and 2 at Montana’s Colstrip plant

shut down in 2020. These are directly due to the increases in alternative energy.

Jobs, jobs, jobs. Reinstate government-sponsored retraining programs for fossil fuel workers into clean energy jobs (the pay and benefits are good). Hound your representatives to change this country’s negative outlook on alternative energy.

We have an abundance of natural gas and some say it’s the answer to our power needs. But check out Iowa’s McCabe Farm. They have a working anaerobic digester that, with the waste of 2,400 head of cattle, produces 950k kilowatts of methane power. That digester alone produces enough methane to power the county school buses, garbage trucks and all county vehicles.

I just heard young Greta Thunberg give the most emotionally moving speech at the 2019 U.N. Climate Action Summit. Her passion is unabashed, raw and from the heart. Let us all be as passionate as her.

#renewable is doable.

Wilbert J.D. Van Straaten
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Law firm, enviro groups ask court to bar new sewer hookups in Big Sky

EBS STAFF

BUTTE – On Feb. 3, Cottonwood Environmental Law Center, Montana Rivers, and the Gallatin Wildlife Association asked a federal court to bar the Big Sky County Water and Sewer District from connecting new sewer lines and irrigating the Big Sky Resort golf course with treated wastewater.

The organizations filed a motion for a preliminary injunction in federal district court in Butte. The motion asks the court to prohibit the district from accepting new sewer hookups as well as irrigating the Big Sky Golf Course in Meadow Village with treated wastewater containing concentrations of nitrogen above 10 milligrams per liter. An additional request asks that the district be required to disclose nitrogen concentrations in water used to irrigate the golf course.

John Meyer, Cottonwood's attorney, alleged that the wastewater with which the district has been irrigating the golf course contains concentrations of nitrogen that exceed Montana Department of Environmental Quality standards.

The district has been given two weeks to respond to the filing. Ron Edwards, general manager of the district, said, "Our legal team is working on a response."

Big Sky Discovery Academy graduates first ever senior class

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – Big Sky Discovery Academy was founded in 2014 as an alternate option for students in the Big Sky community. Then, in the fall of 2018 at the request of a few students, the academy became a full-time high school. On Feb. 16, two of the students who originally pushed for Discovery to be a full high school will graduate as part of the first ever, five-person senior class.

The ceremony will feature students taking a lap up at Big Sky Resort in their caps and gowns followed by an outdoor ceremony and reception. The gathering will be small in order to meet current local county health rules, but the spirit of the occasion will be big.

Look forward to full coverage of Big Sky Discovery Academy's unique curriculum as well as each of the five graduating seniors following the graduation ceremony.

County lifts business hour restrictions

EBS STAFF

BOZEMAN – On Feb. 4, the Gallatin Board of Health voted to extend and amend an emergency health rule that restricts businesses hours of operation and capacity to control the spread of COVID-19 in the county with amendments. Restaurants, bars, casinos, breweries, distilleries, coffee shops and bowling alleys can stay open until 2 a.m. but must still operate at 50 percent capacity and keep tables socially distanced and limited to groups of six.

"This is not without risk," Health Officer Matt Kelley said later in the meeting. "This board just took a big leap of faith and I want the bar owners and restaurant owners to hear that."

On Feb. 9, Gallatin County reported 257 active cases of COVID-19 and 11 hospitalizations.

There have been a total of 51 confirmed deaths related to the coronavirus. The testing positivity rate on a seven-day rolling average is currently 5.5 percent, but, Kelley noted, when you remove the Big Sky asymptomatic surveillance testing data, that average climbs to 8 percent.

Ace Hardware Big Sky receives top recognition

ACE HARDWARE CORPORATION

BIG SKY – Ace Hardware Corporation is pleased to announce that Ace Hardware, Big Sky has achieved designation as a "Pinnacle Performance Retailing" store for its outstanding performance. Developed as part of Ace's retail growth strategy, Higher Ground, Pinnacle Performance Retailing is focused on Ace's customers to ensure that Ace stores deliver on its helpful brand promise.

For more than 96 years, Ace Hardware has been serving its neighbors with helpful service and quality products. With more than 5,300 stores in approximately 70 countries, the team at the Big Sky location is one of only a few hundred Ace retailers to achieve this elite Pinnacle status. To achieve Pinnacle Performance Retailing, the team successfully completed a number of key performance drivers focused on quality, service and convenience, helping them provide a better overall shopping experience in their local community.

One example of a proven performance driver is "Helpful Certification," the foundational element of Ace's "Certified Ace Helpful" retail training curriculum. To become certified, Ace Hardware associates complete courses such as Helpful 101 and 201 and the store conducts a weeklong team-based certification event.

Ace Hardware Big Sky was also honored in 2020 as the Best Business in Outlaw Partners' annual "Best of Big Sky reader's choice award. The fact that they are a back-to-back recipient of that award is further testament to the business's exemplary customer service record.

Resort Tax board updates application process, returns to annual cycle

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – Big Sky Resort Area District collections for December of fiscal year 2021 are in. And they're nearly on par with FY2020.

The district defines a fiscal year as starting on July 1 and ending on June 30.

Concern over lower collection numbers during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic spurred the Resort Tax board to shift its allocation cycle to twice a year instead of once. In a promising turn of events, collections for December of FY2021 were down just 1.6 percent from FY2020.

Due to the encouraging numbers, Daniel Bierschwale, executive director of the district, recommended at a Feb. 10 board meeting that the board return to an annual allocation cycle.

"Not only is our community staying healthy and safe, but it is doing very well amidst the pandemic," Bierschwale said during the meeting.

Moving forward, the district will return to an annual allocation cycle and applications for FY22 will go live on March 1, 2021. Meetings for the next allocation cycle have been set for June 7 and 10, 2021.

The board will also be implementing an application scoring system to guide the decision-making process during an allocation cycle. The system features a sheet with a table that each board member can fill out for each project that applied for funding. The goal of the new system is to make the decision-making process more objective and to encourage applicants to collaborate on projects.

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Ice sports heating up in Big Sky

BY BRANDON WALKER
PHOTOS BY MATT DODD

BIG SKY – Already heralded for its bountiful selection of outdoor winter activities, Big Sky’s ice sports are garnering increasing interest.

Both the youth hockey program and curling league have witnessed increased participation this year, while three-on-three hockey and curling leagues each reached their capacity limits as well, according to Ryan Blechta, president of the Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association.

“You don’t have to be a hockey player to like the rink,” said Blechta, who’s been involved in BSSHA since its humble beginning in 2009. “You can just be a skater, you could like broomball, you could like curling.”

Designated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, BSSHA has evolved from operating a small, portable rink with no means of resurfacing ice to a regulation-

sized rink with an established location in Big Sky Town Center, complete with a Zamboni to tend the ice. Yet that’s merely the tip of the iceberg.

According to Blechta, the 65 youth hockey participants this season, ranging in age from 4 to 14, represent a 15 percent increase in last year’s numbers, and Blechta estimates that Broomball participation has increased between 5 and 10 percent from a season ago.

Meanwhile, due to caps to ensure an even number of teams, both the curling league—made up of 120 athletes that filled enrollment within 48 hours of the registration period opening—and three-on-three hockey leagues—another 72 players—maxed out their participation limits this season.

All BSSHA programs began for the season in late December, except curling, which started on Jan. 8. Blechta said, weather permitting, all seasons will run through March 22.



One community staple, the Pavelich Invitational, won’t take place this year. Blechta acknowledged the restrictions present due to COVID-19 and said he views the game as a community event. While he believes it would be possible to host the game without fans in attendance, while adhering to guidelines, doing so wouldn’t be the same.

“I think it’s just a good year to kind of take that off. Let’s see what happens with COVID, and I’m sure we’ll be able to have events that are larger come a year from now,” Blechta said. “So, we’ll do it bigger and better next year.”

With an increase in participation for the youth hockey program came some organizational changes to help better assist the participants. Athletes could participate in either “Advanced”—Mondays and Thursdays—or “Beginner” practices—Wednesdays— this season, an adjustment that BSSHA Youth Hockey Coach Joseph McFadden says has been beneficial.

“It gets better every day,” McFadden said. “I feel like a lot of the kids get to ski, which translates pretty well to ice skating.”

On Jan. 31, those in the Advanced Youth Hockey program hosted a Bozeman U-14 girls hockey team for a friendly game on the Big Sky Town Center rink. “The kids had a blast and they worked their butt off and you saw them really care about what was going on in the rink, you know, not just another day of practice,” Blechta said.

After roughly a month of practice and scrimmaging against one another, the game afforded the athletes the opportunity to test their skills against a new opponent and allowed their coaches to find areas where they can continue to improve.

“It kind of ... showed the flaws and what we need to work on,” McFadden said, pointing specifically to possessing the puck. “Our skating was really strong.”

McFadden said he enjoys giving back to the sport and while the athletes may not be aware, he along with the other coaches hope to hone more than just the athletes’ abilities with a stick, puck and skates.

“You’re still getting to put on ice skates and helping out kids, that will hopefully not just take it in a hockey sense but in a life sense ... like solving problems and becoming team members, and having respect for themselves and the opponent,” he said, adding that “losing gracefully and trying their hardest and learning how to fail,” are other key lessons.

Looking ahead, the youth hockey program hopes to welcome Lewistown for another friendly match in the near future and these games could lead to eventually establishing a travel or club team in Big Sky, according to both Blechta and McFadden.

“I think it would be amazing to get a travel team going in the next few years,” McFadden said. He added that he’d welcome a potential high school hockey team down the road as well.

Blechta drew a comparison between the hockey program and the newly established Lone Peak High School varsity soccer teams, which started as club teams in 2018.

In addition to possible program expansion in years to come, the Town Center rink is receiving upgrades in the near future. A concrete pad will be laid down this spring to permanently position the otherwise portable



chilling tubes where the rink currently resides, saving time on set-up and likely allowing the rink to open for a longer period of time each year. And the Big Sky Community Organization has allotted space inside of the soon-to-be-completed BASE community center for BSSHA to house its Zamboni and utilize as a mechanical area.

Blechta, who said he wouldn’t have anticipated BSSHA growing into what it is today, is looking forward to an increased collaboration between BSSHA and BSCO.

“We’re hoping to join up with BSCO ... and utilize a lot of their knowledge with programming and some of their systems they use,” he said. “We’re really excited about that because we feel like we’ve gotten to a point now where we’re getting bigger and bigger every year.”

Blechta said the effort wouldn’t be successful without key components, pointing to the volunteers who lend their time assisting the organization and the sponsors who’ve helped BSSHA acquire equipment, among other necessities.

Big Sky’s ice sports future is heating up. “We’re already thinking we need another rink,” Blechta said.





PHOTO BY ASHLEY DODD



Boyne shifts energy portfolio to 100 percent renewable



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – Boyne Resorts will soon run all North American operations on 100 percent renewable electric energy.

On Feb. 2, Boyne retroactively announced a renewable energy purchase commitment with CMS Enterprises, a subsidiary of CMS Energy Corporation that invests in renewable energy projects, a move that will offset all North American energy consumption, effective Jan. 1, 2021.

The purchase of renewable energy credits is one part of Boyne's larger sustainability plan called the "ForeverProject."

The goal of the long-term project is to achieve net zero carbon emissions across North American operations by 2030, according to a Feb. 2 statement. Working with CMS Enterprises has accelerated Boyne's sustainability effort by eliminating approximately 70 percent of the company's carbon footprint driven by its electrical usage.

"Human-driven climate change is an urgent issue for the world and most certainly for the snowsports industry," said Stephen Kircher, Boyne Resorts president and chief executive officer, in the statement. "Though we have been a thoughtful steward of our resort properties over the last eight decades, it was clear to our team that we were not doing enough and fast enough if we are to truly help reverse the effects our carbon footprint has on the planet's climate."

The push for Boyne Resorts to meet sustainability goals gained urgency in October of 2019, spurred by the Mountain Towns 2030 Net Zero Summit. The summit was

sponsored by Boyne and featured collaborative discussions between the largest players in the ski industry concerning sustainability efforts.

Early this year, Boyne plans to install a solar array at its Boyne Mountain Resort in Michigan. The installation will serve as a pilot for more potential installations across the network of Boyne's 13 resorts.

Closer to home, Boyne is also taking measures to offset carbon emissions at Big Sky Resort.

"In March 2020, Big Sky Resort began offsetting our electrical consumption from lift operations," said Stacie Mesuda, manager of public relations at Big Sky Resort in an email. "We've recently expanded this commitment with the ForeverProject. All of Boyne Resorts' electrical consumption, including Big Sky Resort, is now carbon-free through a bulk renewable energy credit purchase."

As part of its sustainability efforts and commitment to the ForeverProject, Big Sky Resort has partnered with Chicago-based Tradewater, a company dedicated to preventing greenhouse gas emissions. The partnership allows guests to calculate the impact of their trip and purchase credits to offset it.

Big Sky Resort is also a part of a Climate Challenge led by the National Ski Areas Association. The challenge is a voluntary program dedicated to helping ski areas reduce greenhouse gas emissions, engage in climate advocacy and reduce costs for energy use.

Visit boyneresorts.com/press-releases/20210202-foreverproject-sustainability to read the full press release and bigskyresort.com/sustainability to learn more about the ForeverProject and additional sustainability measures.

Big Sky Relief launches cross-county vaccine distribution plan

BY MIRA BRODY

BIG SKY – Distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine has proven complicated in many cities and states across the country. Now the vaccine is making its way to southwest Montana, and in Big Sky, which straddles two counties, a broad-based collaborative group is working together to get the distribution game right.

In order to ensure seamless collaboration between Gallatin and Madison counties and to get the vaccine into the arms of Big Sky residents who meet the criteria for Phase 1B, Big Sky Relief has gathered a partnership of organizations to help streamline distribution within the community as doses become available.

The partnership includes Big Sky Resort Area District, Bozeman Health, Madison Valley Medical Center, Gallatin City-County Health Department and Madison County Public Health Department.

“We all have identified that cross-county communication needs to increase,” said Daniel Bierschwale, executive director for the Big Sky Resort Area Tax District. “We’ve had a really good response from both counties working together in partnership to try and move needs forward and increase communication as it relates to the vaccination.”

Vaccines are being distributed to counties on a weekly basis, according to Adam Meier, director of Montana’s Department of Public Health and Human Services. Big Sky Medical Center received their first doses on Dec. 23 as a part of the Phase 1A allocation. Bierschwale says they’re unsure yet when Big Sky will receive additional vaccines for Phase 1B.

“While the current supply the state receives each week from the federal government isn’t keeping up with the demand in Montana, the state is one of the best in the nation in administering the vaccine to its citizens,” Meier said in a Feb. 3 press release.

Additionally, DPHHS announced that Montana is on track to receive 16,425 first doses and 13,525 second doses for those awaiting their second vaccine.

Allocation is dependent on factors such as the county’s estimated population of those eligible to receive the vaccine in each phase, previous allocations, and the amount of vaccine they have left to administer.

Both Gallatin and Madison counties are currently in Phase 1B and the individual waitlist process varies depending upon your county of residency and how many vaccines the county receives from the state. Up-to-date information will be made available on bigskyrelief.org as plans for vaccination move between phases.

Vaccine phases include Phase 1A—healthcare workers and those in assisted living facilities—1B, 1C and 2. In Phase 1B, vaccines are available to those 70 years of age and older, 16 to 69 years of age with a high-risk medical condition, and Native Americans and other persons of color.

The partnership through Big Sky Relief does not require any additional funding, according to Bierschwale, since all vaccinations are being funded through the state. Bierschwale says the roles of BSRAD and Big Sky Relief are largely to facilitate communication. The location where vaccines will be distributed in Big Sky is yet to be determined.

Gallatin County residents

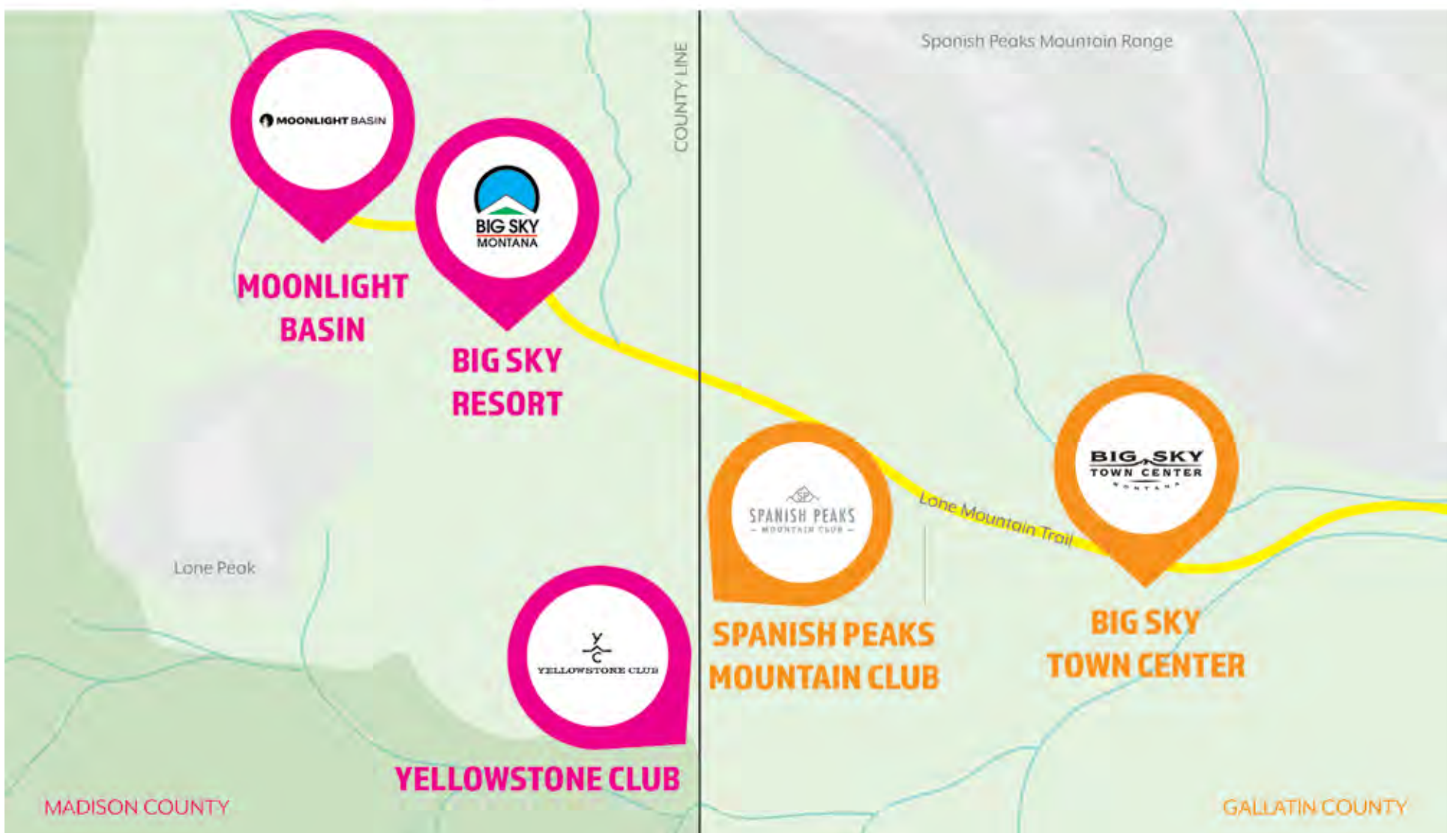
Those in Gallatin County can complete a waitlist form. At this time, only people who meet the criteria of Phase 1B will be added to the waitlist and county officials will contact residents when their dose is available. To stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccination information in Gallatin County, sign up for the county’s vaccine notification system.

Madison County residents

Madison County residents can call (406) 682-4223 to be added to the waitlist. People in all Phases (1B, 1C and 2) may call to be added to the waitlist, but doses will only be made available for those that meet the criteria of Phase 1B at this time. More information on the waitlist process is available through the Madison County Medical Center.

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION PHASES

- 1A**—Frontline healthcare workers, long-term care facility staff and residents, first responders
- 1B**—Those 70 and older, American Indians and other people of color, those 16-69 with underlying health conditions
- 1C**—Essential workers, those in congregate care settings, those 60 and older, or 16-59 with underlying health conditions
- 2**—General public, anyone over the age of 16





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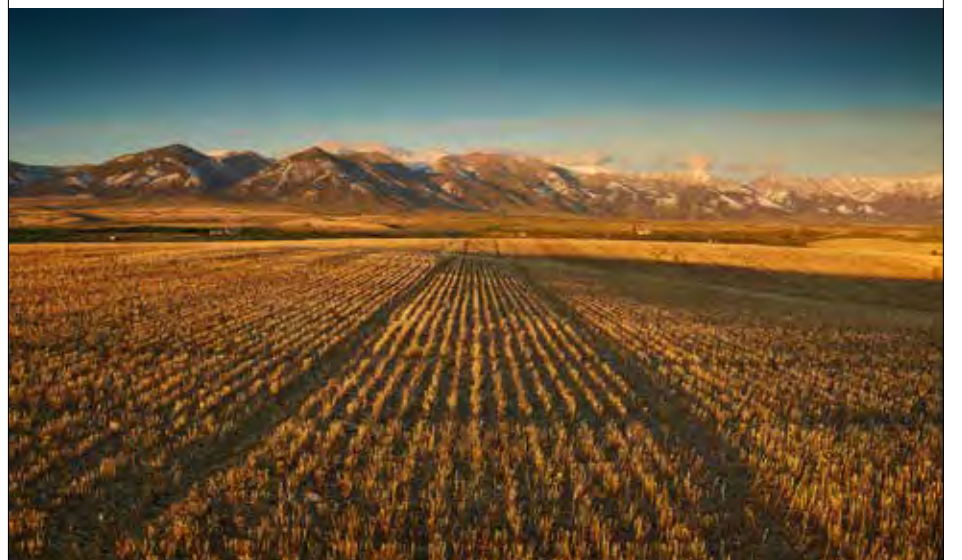
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OMS and LPHS return to 100 percent in-person learning

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – After an uncertain year featuring different learning models and adaptation in the face of a constantly shifting pandemic landscape, the Big Sky School District is returning Ophir Middle School and Lone Peak High School to one hundred percent in-person learning.

Ophir Elementary School returned to 100 percent in-person learning on Jan. 11, 2021 and, after a delay, OMS returned on Feb. 9. LPHS is set to return on Feb. 15 at which point the entire district will be operating under Learning Model 3.

The return to in-person learning is made possible by the efforts of many, and in particular, by the Back to School task force created by the school board in March of 2020 to tackle the challenges presented by the pandemic head-on.

After schools across the county were ordered to close in March of 2020 by Gov. Steve Bullock, teachers, administrators and technical support staff at BSSD met and worked on a plan to reopen to 100 percent online learning.

BSSD finished the 2019-2020 school year with online schooling and during the summer of 2020, the task force and school board worked on creating four different learning models and a survey was sent to parents so they could vote on which model they preferred. In August of 2020, a school reopening plan was shared with parents detailing the decision to reopen with Learning Model 2. This learning model featured 50 percent in-person and 50 percent virtual learning with students sorted into rotating pods.

Now, the school is moving to Learning Model 3, which includes 100 percent of students on campus Monday through Friday during regular school hours. When possible, social distancing guidelines will be adhered to, and, if not possible, plexiglass will be erected as a barrier between students at their respective desks. Additional precautions include staff and administrators monitoring hallways between classes, limiting public restroom use, and that students will never share materials, according to the task force report shared at a Jan. 19 school board meeting. In addition, students will wear masks and those who have opted in to the testing program will be tested weekly.

Whitney Littman is a trustee on the school board as well as the chair of the task force. Along with Littman, the task force included Matt Jennings, another board member, as well as school administrators, teachers and parents. Littman estimated the task force started with eight members and has expanded as necessary.

The task force met weekly since March of 2020 with the goal of creating new strategies and policies to address COVID-19, and ultimately, return children in the district to in-person learning, Littman said.

“There has been incredible collaboration across the district,” Littman said. “We are so fortunate to have the leadership that we do. In terms of our administrators, between Brittany Shirley at the elementary and Marlo Mitchem at the middle school and high school, and then Dustin Shipman as the superintendent, they make a good team. These are challenging times managing federal, state and local mandates and then many personal emotions regarding health. They all work well together and just have a great ability to get people together and get people motivated and working towards the greater cause, which as we all know, is educating the students in this district.”

A large factor in the school’s ability to reopen has been weekly COVID testing of staff and students.

Originally, the school was using a company called Picture Genetics for their surveillance testing. Then, when the surveillance testing program organized by Big Sky Relief began, Loren Bough, the chair of the school board, was able to arrange for the school to participate in the community-wide surveillance testing program.

According to Littman, BSSD is the only school district in the state of Montana that has a weekly surveillance testing program and the data from testing has been a huge piece of the puzzle that has been reopening the school to in-person learning.

Currently, 76 percent of OES has opted in to weekly testing, 75 percent of OMS, 64 percent of LPHS and 91.5 percent of all district staff have opted in. In addition to testing data, student input has also informed actions taken by the task force.

Madison Strauss, a senior at LPHS joined the ranks of the task force in December of 2020 and has served as a liaison between the student body and the school board. Strauss is a member of the LPHS chapter of the National Honor Society as well as Student Council and Interact Club among other extracurriculars. Strauss explained that she served as an advocate for the student body as well as a conduit for information to inform the student body what the school board was doing.



Rosie Hewitt (left), middle school Math teacher, and Gretchen Goodman (right), middle school English teacher, along with all middle school staff, wore their Miners t-shirts to welcome students back on Feb. 9. PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. MARLO MITCHEM

“I think that it is extremely important for the students to be involved in the decision-making process because they are the ones that are most affected,” Strauss said in an email. “It is important for the faculty and decision-making authorities to know how the students are feeling and how they are reacting to the changes being made. It is important to include the perspective of the students and to think about how we might react. We could include some perspectives or ideas that some adults might not have thought about.”

Now that the dates are set and the measures are in place for students to return to 100 percent in-person learning, the task force will take a hiatus. According to Littman, they collectively decided that it is best at this point to allow the school’s administration to do their job and execute the plan put in place.

As a mother with kids in the district, Littman expressed excitement that they all get to return in-person and noted that her eighth-grade boy still hasn’t met some of the other kids in his grade.

“I’m so thankful that they’re going to have an opportunity to finish out the rest of the year in school,” Littman said. “The events and traditions that happen here are life experiences, to be referenced forever. I want these kids to talk about ski days, the Washington D.C. trip, Expedition Yellowstone, prom, etc., not remote learning and COVID. I hope we can get back to that place soon.”

The focus, according to Littman, has always been on providing the children in the district with the best possible education. She went on to express her appreciation of everyone who has made the return to 100 percent in-person learning possible.

“I can’t say enough of the district: students, parents, teachers, staff and everybody in the community,” Littman said. “It’s so amazing to be part of this group, because everybody’s response has been so collaborative in the best interest of safety and education.”

Avy beacon park coming to Big Sky

As backcountry usage rises, local student aims to help keep community safe

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – In the not-so-distant future, there will be a new avalanche beacon park in Big Sky, a place to practice with transceivers, shovels and probes and hone valuable rescue skills. And it's due to the efforts of one high school student.

Laney Smith is a senior at Lone Peak High School and as part of the International Baccalaureate program she's required to complete a CAS project. The project is inspired by the three elements of the IB program: creativity, action and service. The final product can take myriad forms.

Smith said she was brainstorming potential CAS projects with her mom when she came up with the idea to create an avalanche beacon park in Big Sky. Part of a school backcountry club during her freshman and sophomore years, Smith says she's always loved skiing in the backcountry.

"I came up with the idea for the beacon training park because backcountry is something I've always loved to do," Smith said. "When I was a freshman and sophomore in high school, I was part of the back country club."

Smith initially presented her idea to Big Sky Search and Rescue in October of 2020. According to Andy Dreisbach, a SAR volunteer and owner of Cornerstone Management Services, she gave an eloquent presentation and earned SAR's support for her project.

The next step was applying to the Moonlight Community Foundation for the \$5,500 needed to make the beacon park a reality.

When her request was denied, she turned to private funding sources for help. After reaching out to multiple sources and not receiving support in the capacity she needed, Smith again talked with Dreisbach.

The beacon park project is now largely funded through Dreisbach's company with a \$250 contribution from First Security Bank.

"We're not an incorporated town, so there is no representation for the little guy unless it's carried out by the little guy," Dreisbach said of the funding process.

"One thing that has always made Big Sky so special is the philanthropic interests of its organizations and small businesses," he said. "It's what makes Big Sky Big Sky, and when people are moving here, we'd like them to move here with the intention of carrying that same torch."

After obtaining the necessary funding, Smith ordered the equipment needed to set up the park from Backcountry Access, a company dedicated to high-performance backcountry gear. Currently, she says, the equipment, including a control box and eight training beacons, is en route and the hope is to set up the park by the end of February.

In addition to the equipment on order, Smith plans to create and install signage. She also hinted at a potential sponsor from the Big Sky community where aspiring backcountry travelers could rent gear to practice with at the park. Dreisbach says Cornerstone will also help with any fabrication needed to get the park up and running.



Laney Smith, a senior at LPHS, chose to create a new beacon park in Big Sky for her International Baccalaureate CAS project. PHOTO COURTESY OF LANEY SMITH

The exact location for the beacon park is still being discussed but one of the softball fields in the Big Sky Community Park is a likely location, Smith said and pointed to support from the Big Sky Community Organization and specifically Jeff MacPherson, asset manager with BSCO.

According to MacPherson, the most likely scenario will be that BSCO stores the equipment and signage for the beacon park in the summer and helps maintain it in winter. SAR will likely run programming at the park to educate visitors and provide volunteers during busy times.

"Working with other groups throughout our community is part of our mission statement of collaborating with other entities, local entities," said MacPherson, who also volunteers with SAR.

Both MacPherson and Dreisbach emphasized the importance of this beacon park to the Big Sky community.

"Lift tickets have gotten more and more expensive," Dreisbach said. "People are getting into the backcountry more and more. I go on a couple body recoveries every year."

While Big Sky Resort operates its own avy beacon park, it requires any potential user to have lift access and the ability to ski a blue run. Being on flat ground and in the Meadow Village area, the new beacon park will be accessible to more user groups, including snowmobilers, who otherwise likely wouldn't make the trek up the hill to practice.

"Hopefully in the coming years we can have Avalanche Level One courses there and have demonstrations and maybe partner with the resort [which] could have ski patrol and the avalanche dogs come down and make it a community thing," Smith said. "Something that could be really cool, in a year that isn't COVID, is having a competition where you and two of your friends pay \$10 to enter and whoever finds the beacons fastest wins a prize."

While there is still much work to be done, once the park is in place there will be many ways to take advantage of this community resource.

"It's a necessity in this town," MacPherson said. "With more people going into the backcountry, we needed an area for people to practice their skills."

Aside from a full class load and a hefty CAS project, Smith plays for the Bozeman high school lacrosse team and works as a ski instructor at Big Sky Resort.

She wants to be an architect and has already been accepted to the University of Vermont's College of Mathematics and Engineering, though she's waiting to hear from her top choice, the University of British Columbia.

In the meantime, Smith has kept busy earning 50 hours for each of the three strands of the IB program and leading the charge to make her CAS project—helping keep Big Sky safe—a reality.



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3-5pm - Big Sky Art Auction Preview / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
6pm - Big Sky Community Rodeo / Big Sky Events Arena
9pm - Street Dance / Town Center Plaza

SATURDAY, JULY 17

4-7pm - Big Sky Art Auction / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza

SUNDAY, JULY 18

TBA - Mutton Bustin Pre-Ride Competition / Big Sky Events Arena
6pm - Big Sky Bingo Night / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

11am-5pm - Big Sky PBR / Western Sports Foundation Golf Tournament
5pm - Farmers Market
6pm - Golf Tourney Reception
7pm - Big Sky PBR Kickoff / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
8pm - Live Music / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza

THURSDAY, JULY 22

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open / Town Center Plaza
2pm - PBR Meet & Greet / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
4pm - Live Music / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Night 1 Bull Riding / Big Sky Events Arena
TBA - Music in the Mountains Concert

FRIDAY, JULY 23

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open / Town Center Plaza
2pm - PBR Meet & Greet / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
4pm - Live Music / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Night 2 Bull Riding / Big Sky Events Arena
Following Bull Riding - Jason Boland & The Stragglers

SATURDAY, JULY 24

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open / Town Center Plaza
2pm - PBR Meet & Greet / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
4pm - Live Music / PBR Basecamp Tent in Town Center Plaza
7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Championship Night 3 Bull Riding / Big Sky Events Arena
Following Bull Riding - Robert Earl Keen

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SECTION 2: ENVIRONMENT & OUTDOORS, SPORTS, HEALTH



Ski the 'ghee pg. 22

Powder daze:
searching for the goods pg. 26

Headaches and migraines pg. 31

THE NEW WEST



BY TODD WILKINSON

Amid the fervor over Greater Yellowstone's inundation by COVID-19 refugees with some transplants possessing little awareness of what it really means to live in a wild place, there are many examples of people who "get it."

Some are not only exponents of having a high level of appreciation, but by what they do for a living they're consciously contributing to public respect for wildlife conservation.

Just over a year ago, Jim Bortz made an impetuous move from Pennsylvania to Cody, Wyoming, and the result catapulted him into the stratosphere. Bortz is a wildlife artist who was mostly known, among the piscatorially-minded, for his portrayals of fish ranging from trout to muskies and bass.

Being raised, as many sporting artists are, on a staple of dramatic illustrations that appeared in outdoor magazines, Bortz dreamed of one-day going west where he could live closer to charismatic megafauna.

For those who don't know, "charismatic megafauna" are big, lumbering creatures that can injure people who aren't respectful of them, like grizzlies, moose, elk and bison.

Bortz was especially attracted to our region because of the fact that Greater Yellowstone is the lone ecosystem in the Lower 48 that still has healthy populations of all of the mammal and bird species that were here in 1491, before Europeans invaded the continent.

"I'd been searching for a place to land in the Rocky Mountain states for a couple of years," Bortz said. "When I got accepted into the Buffalo Bill Art Show in Cody, I started doing a little research on the community and it wasn't long before I headed to the West with my entire life condensed into a 6-by-12 U-Haul trailer."

Bortz, in his 50s, was ready to entertain reinvention.

The Buffalo Bill Art Show is among the premier annual showcases for contemporary Western art and it includes an auction where historical works by deceased masters are sometimes sold.



"Hoss" 30x30 oil (wild mustang, the wild horse herd just east of Cody). PAINTINGS BY JIM BORTZ

Newcomer Bortz a rising wildlife art star and conservation advocate



"The Survivor 2" 18x24 oil (coyote painting based on excursion into Yellowstone Park).
PAINTINGS BY JIM BORTZ

Being invited to display one's work there is a big deal, and Bortz knows it. "That show has opened some doors for me that I'm still trying to wrap my brain around," he said. "There are times when none of this seems real."

Bortz has been compared to painters Carl Rungius and the late Bob Kuhn. As those heroes aged, they made their portrayals of animals as beautiful as any artist could with the human figure.

"Accurate drawing is vitally important, but I'm working toward an impressionistic style of painting while hoping to maintain pleasing level of believability," Bortz said. "My hunting and fishing adventures enrich my life and inspire most of my work."

This year he'll fulfill another dream by having his paintings appear in the Western Visions show at the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole.

Indeed, Bortz is a rising star in wildlife and equine art and he's having trouble keeping up with demand for his work.

That's the paradox of becoming successful. You come to Greater Yellowstone so that you can spend more time outdoors hunting, fishing and wildlife watching so that you can produce better paintings. Yet, when your art career takes off, you find yourself stuck in the studio more often.

Still, Bortz makes sure he puts his brushes down. Not long ago, he posted an image on Facebook. He had been out bow hunting mule deer in the Absaroka Mountains near Cody. When a grizzly bear showed up unexpectedly, he clutched his bear spray in one hand, camera in another and he began talking gently to the visitor, slowly backing away out of mortal respect.

That's showing a lot of poise for a newcomer. With Bortz's work, locals or people from outside the region can vicariously roam on adventures rooted in real-life encounters, which heightens the sense of being there.

"Everything I love about the sporting life is now pretty much right outside my door," he said. "My love of western big game and fly fishing make this area one enormous unexplored playground. Even when I'm getting run off the river by an approaching grizzly, I find myself grinning ear to ear by the time I get back to the truck. I've never felt more alive."

Most importantly, Bortz keenly understands that the region is the last and best of its kind in the West, and is a vocal advocate for wildlife conservation and protecting habitat.

Visit jimbortzart.com to see more of Bortz's work.

Todd Wilkinson is the founder of Bozeman-based Mountain Journal and is a correspondent for National Geographic. He also authored of the book "Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek," featuring photography by Thomas D. Mangelsen, about famous Jackson Hole grizzly bear 399.

Water Wisdom

Balancing the books



Algae growth and low flows in the South Fork of the West Fork Gallatin River. Low flows can exacerbate water quality issues, making conservation vital to river health. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GALLATIN RIVER TASK FORCE

BY DAVID TUCKER
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

So far, the banner snow year promised by a La Niña weather pattern hasn't quite materialized. While the recent storm cycle has greatly improved conditions, this summer's water supply has still been on my mind lately.

Considering the fact that human water consumption continues increasing in the upper Gallatin River watershed, is this the year we see the first signs of a major shortage? And what impacts would a shortage have on the health of the Gallatin River?

If you read this column regularly—and you should—you likely know that 100 percent of our household water supply comes from underground aquifers. These aquifers are fed by precipitation, which in our neck of the woods comes primarily in the form of snowmelt. Less snow equals less snowmelt and less snowmelt equals less aquifer recharge. But what does that lack of recharge mean to the Gallatin, a surface water fed by runoff, rain, tributaries and snow that melts directly into the stream?

It turns out, water under the ground also feeds our surface waters. The two sources are connected, and if aquifers are inadequately recharged, water quality in streams and rivers like the Gallatin can suffer greatly. Inadequate flows of clean water can't dilute concentrations of harmful pollutants. At the Gallatin River Task Force, we're trying to improve water quality in the Gallatin, so naturally we're concerned about residential and commercial water supply and demand.

To this point, we haven't seen major impacts to the water supply in the upper Gallatin watershed, but conditions are constantly evolving and projections for the future are ominous. The 2017 Montana Climate Assessment predicted less snow and in turn less available fresh water within 25 years.

In a 2015 Source Capacity Study commissioned by the Big Sky Water and Sewer District, researchers estimated a capacity deficit from water sources used by the district by 2023 at the latest. In case you're keeping count, that's two years from now.

All demographic studies predict more people moving to southwest Montana, with growth in Gallatin County outpacing all other similarly

sized communities. When we consider these two realities taken together, we have to ask when will demand outpace supply, and what impacts will that demand have on cherished waterways like the Gallatin?

Getting a sense of current supply and demand is harder than you might think. In Big Sky, there are more than two dozen public water systems, from the Big Sky Water and Sewer District, which services about 40 percent of all water users, to small entities that service individual HOAs and individual systems at single-family homes. This decentralized system makes getting data difficult, but having everyone on the same page is essential for understanding how our community's water needs influence our watershed's water quality and quantity. In most instances, water usage isn't even metered, making exact calculations impossible.

Coordination between all the public water system managers makes community-scale trends easier to understand and forecast and makes it possible to plan for catastrophic events like wildfire. This is the only way to implement a sustainable plan for Big Sky's future water use, and without a comprehensive understanding of water use, we won't be able to keep the Gallatin healthy for future generations to enjoy.

While some may say an easy solution is to limit all future development, Big Sky and the upper Gallatin tributaries already have quality problems exacerbated by uncertain water supply. The South Fork, the Middle Fork, and the West Fork are all impaired by state standards, meaning they exceed certain pollution thresholds. A contributing factor to that impairment is the volume of water in those streams. While we certainly must continue taking steps to limit pollutants reaching our waterways, we also must be taking steps to ensure adequate and increased flows now.

Knowing more about current supply and demand is a step in the right direction for forecasting future river health. Again, all signs point toward more people living in the upper Gallatin watershed and less snow—currently our primary source of fresh water—falling in the upper Gallatin watershed.

Without creative solutions driven by comprehensive data, this isn't a sustainable combination. But by collecting and sharing information, we can make a plan to keep our waterways full of clean, cold water.

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



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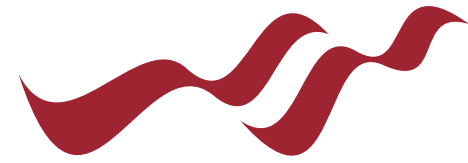
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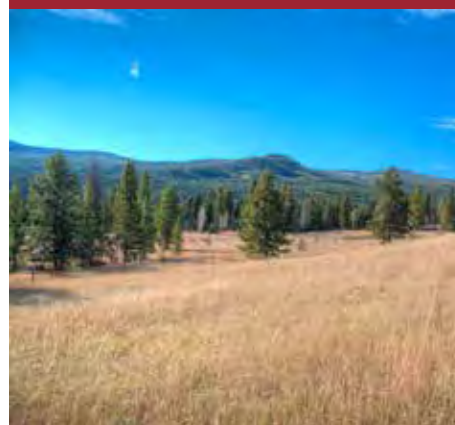
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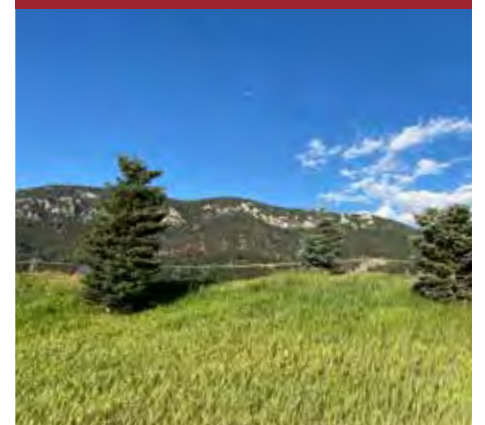
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“Look at me” culture leaves too many marks



BY MARJORIE “SLIM” WOODRUFF

I attended a ranger program recently dealing with Leave No Trace. The ranger showed a picture of rock art, or “ancestral inscriptions” as archaeologists often refer to the practice.

We agreed that one does not touch or otherwise deface it. Then she flashed a shot of some modern graffiti nearby—think of a heart, two names and the word “forever.” “Is this OK?”

“No” was the reaction that came easily from all of us. “But why? Isn’t it just modern rock art?” she asked.

Indeed. Why are 800-year-old handprints sacrosanct, but not if hacked onto rock walls on public land today? At Capitol Reef National Park in Utah, 19th century pioneers scratched their names and the date into the rocks. Why is this a no-no for the modern visitor?

The pioneers endured drought, famine, disease, and death in order to reach the West and scratch their names on the wall. The modern hiker had to drive 100 miles from the airport in air conditioning and then walk a good half-mile. Isn’t that “suffering” just as important?

One difference may be that now we have the written word, videos, social media and blogs to preserve our encounters with nature for eternity. Four thousand years ago, the only way some people had to express themselves was by drawing on the rocks.

One could argue that ancient rock art is also sacred, places of power that record the history of the people. Yet some modern-day hikers claim that they, too, hold the land sacred, and that their writings on rock also record their history.

There are places in our public lands that are well-known worship sites. Devil’s Tower in Wyoming. Deer Creek narrows in the Grand Canyon. The Sacred Salt Mines on the Colorado River. But when the Park Service tries to close them to visitors to protect them, there is a hue and cry: “This land is just as important to me as it was to them!”

I consider wilderness areas to be spiritual. But saying they are “sacred” to me would push the boundary. Appreciation and worship are not the same. I would posit that as dearly as I hold the Grand Canyon in my heart, the Grand Canyon is not the tradition in

which I was raised, and I cannot, as the Hopi and Zuni can, claim the canyon to be my place of emergence.

I was once privileged to attend a tour of rock art sites led by a Hopi. A New Age visitor proudly announced that her spirit guide was a Hopi shaman. I cringed, but our guide just nodded politely.

For too many years, there existed a group of Anglo businessmen in Northern Arizona who dressed up and simulated Hopi and Zuni dances during the local rodeo. They claimed to be honoring and preserving Native religions. The Hopi rightly complained that they themselves honor and preserve the dances and ceremonies. They did not need “help.”

The Boy Scouts of America has appropriated Indian culture since the group’s founding in 1902. But backlash against Indian costumes and dances have now prompted the Boy Scouts to advise troops to check with local tribes to ascertain if such activities are offensive. Even so, certain troops still perform Indian dances as a form of “educational exploration.”

Lisa Aldred, the author of “Plastic Shamans and Astro turf Sun Dances,” argues that fetishizing masks made by Native Americans perpetuates the oppression that real Indian people experienced. You might ask whether appropriating rock art sites for our own use is part of this process.

Native Americans have had their religion borrowed and taken over by Anglos for a long time, including building sweat lodges, fasting, using peyote and making rock circles.

We also go much farther than appropriation as we destroy what we want to imitate. Modern graffiti is often deposited over centuries-old rock art, and in some parts of the country, rock art has been used for target practice. Stacking up rocks, painting rocks, scratching poetry into the walls—it’s all part of the “look at me!” culture.

Would anyone spray paint over Leonardo DaVinci’s Last Supper? OK, someone probably would, but would anyone defend this vandalism?

Let’s hope that selfies in the great outdoors lead to a good thing: As visitors record themselves standing next to rock art, they might keep their hands to themselves.

Marjorie “Slim” Woodruff is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, a nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. She works at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

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Ski the 'ghee

Finding snow, community and waffle fry nachos at Grand Targhee Resort

BY MIRA BRODY

ALTA, WY – A row of traffic snakes its way up the side of the mountain, slowing to a crawl at the last hairpin turn leading to the parking lot at Grand Targhee Ski Resort. Every other license plate is from a different state, rows of colorful skis poke from roof racks and hype music plays over the din of the window defroster working overtime.

We're all here for the same reason: snow is flying, the chairs are spinning and it's time to ski.

Grand Targhee, as we see it today from the lift lines, began in 1966 when a group of east Idahoans came together with a vision that would support the local economy and provide nearby recreation. It has changed ownership through the decades and received some upgrades, including today's four quad chairs and a resort complete with steaming hot tubs and ski-in, ski-out accommodations.

The landscape surrounding Targhee fills visitors and locals with a sense of awe and belonging, but it would be a disservice not to mention the natives—and namesake—that thrived before the resort was born.

The unsung western face of the Tetons, visible from the ridge on a clear day, was



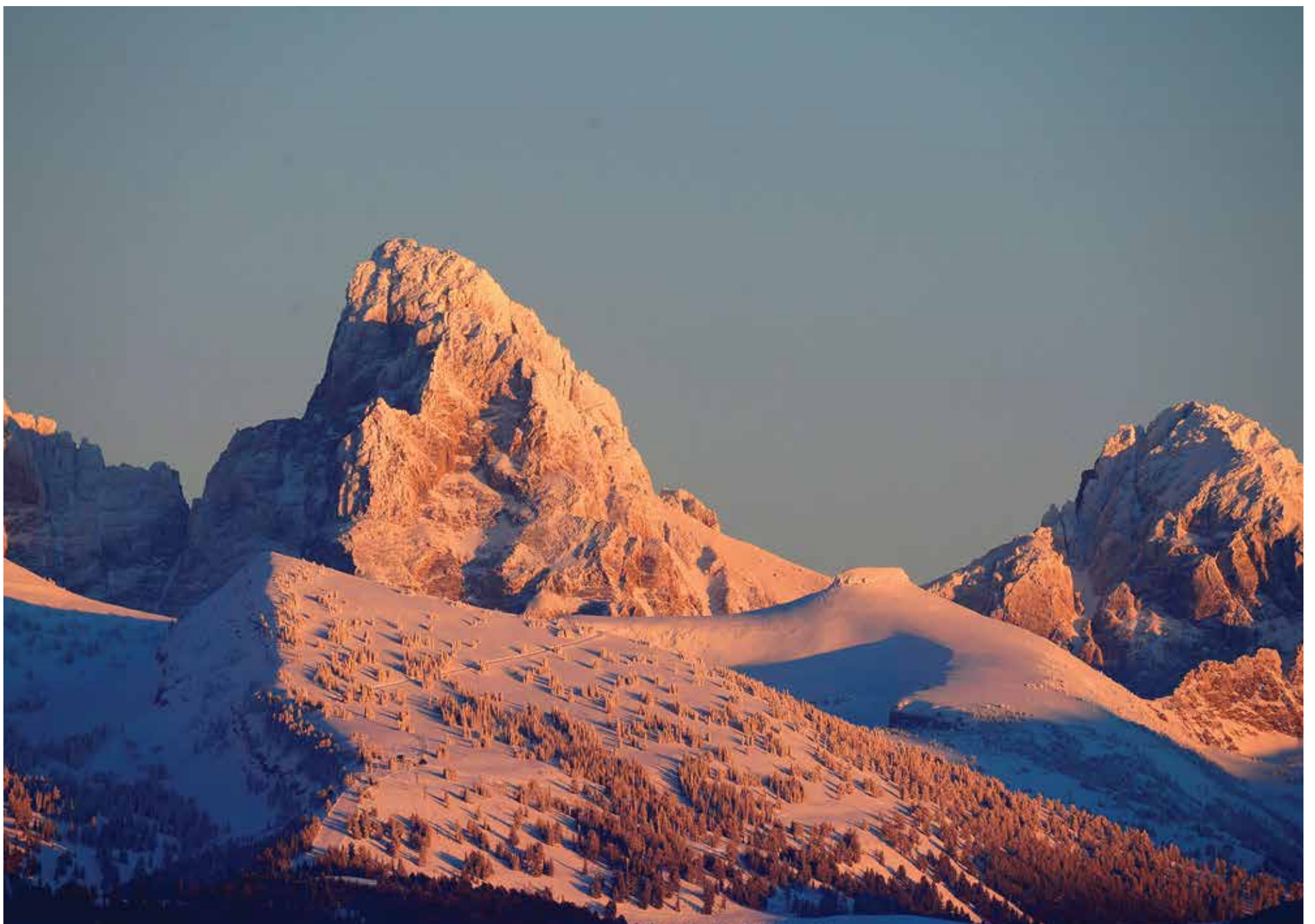
Grab a seat next to a fire pit or Adirondack chair with a refresher from Snake River Brewing to cap off the day. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY

named Tee-Win-At, or “High pinnacles,” by the Shoshone Indians, who, alongside the Bannock, Blackfoot and Crow tribes, were the area's original dwellers.

Chief Targhee, for whom the resort is named, was respected by both his people and white colonists even as they waged war against each other—the establishment of the nearby Fort Hall Reservation forced the once nomadic natives into a life of servitude. Chief Targhee was known for his peaceful approach to resistance as he led his people through those hardships until he was murdered while hunting in the winter of 1871. After his death, the tribes dispersed; the Bannock Tribe disappeared entirely.

Although the infamous “grand foghee” prevented Teton views through the duration of our visit, the focus was on the very thing that southwest Montana has seen very little of all year: powder. A quick glance at the Stick of Truth—an 18-inch glowing pole that measures 24-hour snow accumulation surrounded by an eclectic figurine posse including a moose named Monty—revealed a fresh morning foot and counting. By noon we were waist-deep.

Grand Targhee boasts 2,000 acres—an extra 1,000 accessible by private snowcat—and



On a clear day, you can see the Tetons from Grand Targhee, almost close enough to reach out and touch. PHOTO COURTESY OF GRAND TARGHEE RESORT

while it doesn't have as much of the chute-hugging technical terrain of Big Sky Resort or Bridger Bowl Ski Area, it offers fun, open meadows, gullies and tree runs of both pine and aspen.

And Targhee is one of the snowiest resorts in the country at 500 inches of powder per season, fueled by its unique geography: it's located between the "wet" slope of the Tetons—the Grand reaching 13,775 feet above sea level—and the moisture channel of the Snake River Plain.

There's on-site lodging as well as snowshoeing, Nordic skiing and fat-biking trails and a picturesque village shopping center, including the Trap Bar and Grill, famous for its Trap Nachos with Wydaho waffle fries. You heard that right: waffle fry nachos.

After your legs can no longer hold you upright on the mountain, grab an Adirondack chair and bask in the falling snow. Outdoor fire pits warm the fingers as they clutch your favorite local brew—my Wyoming go-to is Snake River Brewing's Pako's IPA. On the drive home, with the Tetons in the rearview, you'll be wondering when you'll be back next.



Grand Targhee, lovingly nicknamed "grand foghee," didn't allow for picturesque views, but provided more than enough powder to make up for it. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY



Rendezvous Plaza offers warm fire pits, fresh brews and piping hot food for refueling between runs. PHOTO COURTESY OF GRAND TARGHEE RESORT

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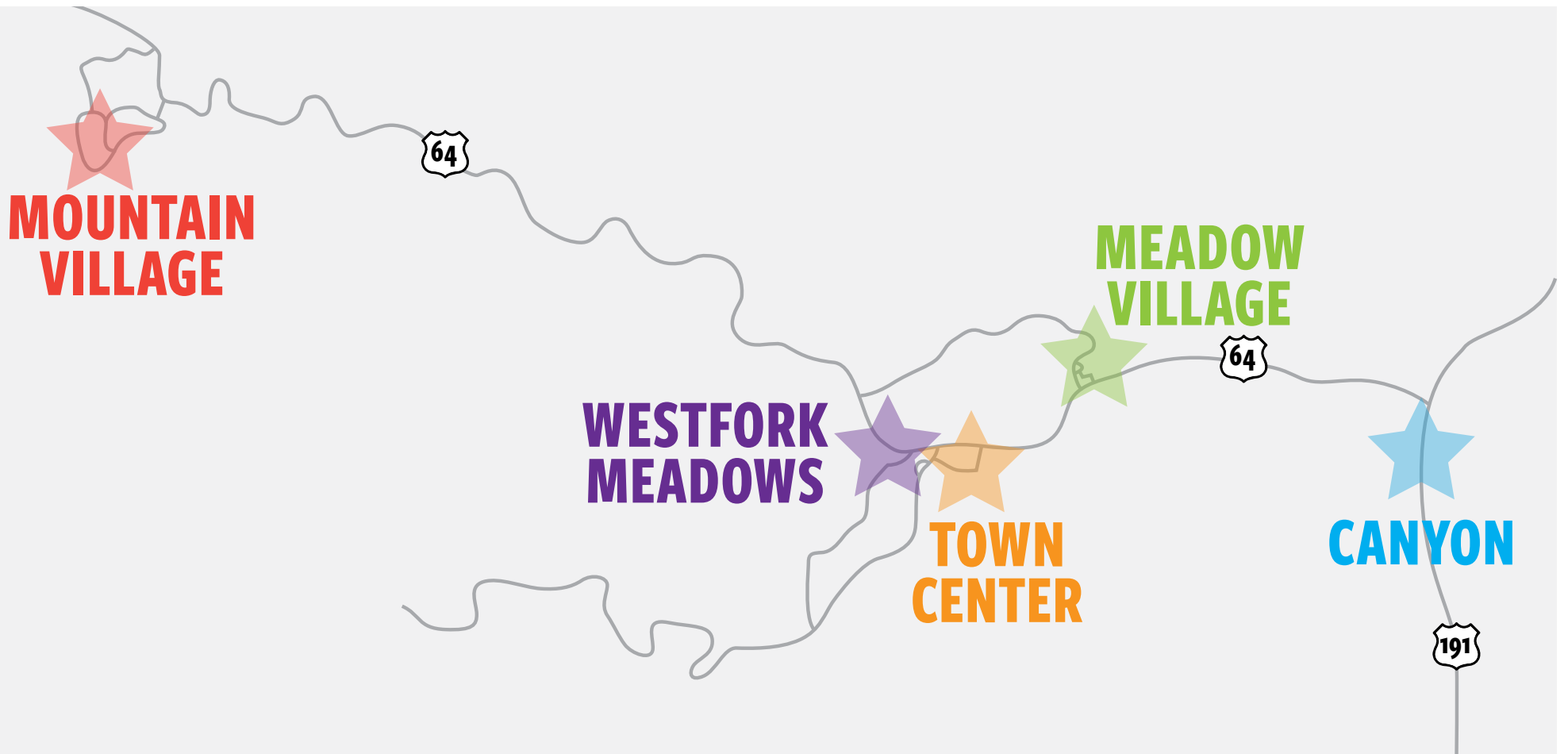
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Powder daze: searching for the goods

BY DAN EGAN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

One of my favorite things to do is to listen to the lift line chatter on a powder day. There is an energy level that swells as skiers and riders roll into the queue in anticipation of the day ahead. The hardcore locals have the pole position in the front of the line, the die-hard guests are in the second wave near the front, the “wannabes” thought that 15 minutes to opening would be early enough and the vacationers who wander in at 9 are aghast at the length of the line.

Here are a few helpful hints while searching for powder.

Know your routes. I'm a big fan of repetition and skiing the same routes over and over again. This pays off in many ways during and after storms. When you know and understand the terrain you are lapping it will also pay dividends and help you understand skier traffic and patterns of where fresh wind-blown snow and powder is deposited.

Storm days are magic. These are the days you experience snow from overnight and potentially capture new snow during your day on the slopes, and if you have done your homework, you will be ripping a line you know well in poor visibility reaping the rewards of free refills along the way. The other advantage to skiing during the storm is shorter lift lines—as the storm builds during the day, the crowd dissipates, leaving the dedicated few to arcing fresh turns till the “buzzer” goes off at 4 p.m.

If there has been a storm overnight and the “powder frenzy” is in full gear as the day breaks, have a plan and stick to it. Don't wait for others, stay focused on the basics: where you'll park, what time you'll enter the lift line—these days it's an hour or so mandatory for front line access. Dress for the wait, make friends in line and most of all, listen to the chatter—you'll glean a lot of intel on where to go and why.

I have a few hard and fast rules: never leave good snow to find better snow, ski runs right off of the lift even if that means sacrificing vertical, and don't go from one lift line to another. Remember while the cool kids are lining up for their dream black diamond run, you could be crushing pow in the trees, wide open trails and steep pitches holding deep powder pillows.

The day after the storm is often my favorite. The frenzy has dulled a bit, the glades are still holding pockets of fresh and the mogul lines have filled in. However, the real magic for the “day after” the storm is locating where the wind transported the snow overnight. This is when your recon



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARREN MILLER FUTURE RETRO

pays off—it could be the leeward side of a ridge, a vein of snow that develops in a gully or clearing in the woods. Knowing these stashes will dramatically expand your Powder To Turn, or PTT, ratio.

Now we turn to the calm after the storm, two or three days after the powder hounds have left, the parking lots have spare spots. The lift lines are back to normal, the sun is shining, there is time for a proper “cup of joe” in the lodge and the plan for the day is unfolding with a few close friends. Knowing the resort, the destination is the north by northeast, in search of cold dry snow left unaffected by sun and tracks.

On these days, if you ride with purpose and understanding, that quality trumps quantity, you will be well rewarded for your efforts because the pitches still have pillows, the ruts are still soft, the bumps hold islands of snow and in the woods, soft snow awaits above clumps of trees or just below them.

As powder days are often far and few between these days, it is always nice to maximize the ones we have as while waiting on the ones to come.

Extreme Skiing Pioneer, Dan Egan coaches and teaches at Big Sky Resort during the winter. His steep camps run Feb. 25-27, March 4-6 and March 11-13. His newest book, Thirty Years in a White Haze will be released in February, for pre-orders visit www.White-Haze.com for autographed copies.



PHOTO BY MIKE MCPHEE

Gardiner duo guides Bruins past Lady Big Horns

BY BRANDON WALKER

GARDINER, Mont. – Gardiner Bruins duo Sophia Darr and Ellie Reinertson combined for 29 of the team's 42 points at home on Feb. 9 to help lift their squad to victory over the Lone Peak Lady Big Horns. The 42-35 loss to Gardiner dropped Lone Peak's road record to 1-4 this season and was their third contest in four days after hosting Lima and Ennis on Feb. 6 and Feb. 8, respectively.

LPHS split those earlier matchups, winning 62-35 against the Bears, with 10-point contributions from both junior Carly Wilson and senior Lyli McCarthy, to snap a four-game losing skid. They fell to the Mustangs two nights later in a tightly contested game, 42-34. That loss spoiled an 11-point effort from sophomore Maddie Cone as well as seven-point contributions from both sophomore Kate King and freshman Vera Grabow.

"They're playing really tough right now," said Lone Peak Head Coach Taylor Cummings. "We've got to get over the hump of finishing and hit shots in tight situations and I think that's just ... experience."

The trek between Big Sky and Gardiner is roughly 120 miles by bus but it didn't appear to phase the Lady Big Horns early as they matched the Bruins offensive output in the first quarter, knotting the score at nine apiece.

Lone Peak balanced its scoring distribution from the opening tip with no player scoring more than one basket in the first quarter and four different Lady Big Horn's finding the scoring column. Senior Ivy Hicks' 3-point field goal resulted in the highest scoring total by any Lone Peak player in



Lone Peak junior Carly Wilson (right) defends an Ennis Mustangs' player in a game on Feb. 8. The Lady Big Horns fell to the Gardiner Bruins on Feb. 9 in their most recent matchup ahead of EBS press day. PHOTO BY MICHELLE HORNING

the opening quarter, while King, Cone and freshman Astrid McGuire also scored baskets. Early on, the Bruins counted on Darr and Reinertson, who together accounted for seven of the team's nine first-quarter points.

The second quarter proved tougher for LPHS as Gardiner limited them to just one field goal—a 3-pointer by senior Sara Wilson. The Bruins outscored the Lady Big Horns by a seven-point margin in the quarter to take a 20-13 lead into the locker room at halftime.

Lone Peak outscored Gardiner 10-8 in the third quarter to close the gap to just five entering the fourth, but the Bruins won the final quarter by two points to lock up the final seven-point victory on their homecourt.

Cummings said her team failed to convert some open looks and she believes fatigue may have been a factor, pointing to the team having played three out of the past four days.

"I think ... the older you get, the more you play, you kind of learn to fight through those things," she said, "but it comes with time."

Hicks scored a team-high 11 points, including three 3-point buckets against the Bruins. "She's got an aggressive mindset right now which is what we need," Cummings said of the senior.

McCarthy and Grabow each added five points apiece for LPHS on the road, while Gardiner's Darr finished with a game-high 16 points and was closely trailed by Reinertson's 13-point night. The Bruins also received five points from Alexis McDonald.

"We're making the right plays, it's just coming down to executing in those final moments," Cummings said. "We're right there and we're so close. It's just getting over that hump and finding a way to execute at the end of the game in the fourth quarter."

Looking to snap a two-game losing streak, LPHS was scheduled to play its final regular season game on Feb. 11, a day after EBS press time, hosting the West Yellowstone Wolverines on Senior Night at the Bough-Dolan Athletic Center where the team owns a 2-4 record this season. The Lady Big Horns have three rostered seniors who were to be honored at the game.

Excluding the result of that matchup, LPHS is 3-8 ahead of the district tournament which will take place Feb. 17-20. Similar to the format of fall athletics, rather than playing a tournament at a singular host site, higher seeds will host playoff matchups for the duration of the tournament as a precaution due to COVID-19.



Lone Peak senior Ivy Hicks (first from left in black uniform) prepares for the jump ball against the Gardiner Bruins on Feb. 9. The Bruins defeated the Lady Big Horns 42-35. PHOTO BY MICHELLE HORNING

Cold third quarter sinks Lone Peak versus Gardiner

BY BRANDON WALKER

GARDINER, Mont. – A trio of Gardiner Bruins reached double figures on Feb. 9 to help their team defeat the Lone Peak Big Horns in Gardiner, 55-42.

Preston Roberts scored a game-high 15 points and Evan Guengerich and John McDonald each added 14 for the Bruins to complete a sweep of both their matchups against the Big Horns this season.

“I was feeling good [and] we definitely came out shooting,” said Lone Peak Head Coach John Hannahs. “The only thing that I knew was coming was that [inevitably] we were going to go cold at some point, and that happened in the third quarter and they took advantage of that which hurt us.” He added that the Big Horns can’t rely solely on 3-pointers and needed to find methods to score other than from beyond the arc.

Embarking on their trip to Gardiner meant the Big Horns were taking the court for the third time in four days, having hosted Lima on Feb. 6 and Ennis on Feb. 8 resulting in a win and a loss, respectively. Senior Jackson Lang scored 20 points and fellow senior Nolan Schumacher added 17 to propel LPHS over Lima 62-52.

Then, in a rescheduled matchup with Ennis, the Mustangs topped the Big Horns 64-42. Schumacher (13 points) and Lang (nine points) both had strong showings in that games as well, and Lone Peak also received 10 points from Mikey Botha.

Playing on the road where the Big Horns sport a 2-4 record this season including the outcome of this contest, Lone Peak started strong from beyond the 3-point arc. Lang knocked down three 3-pointers in the first quarter and sophomore Colter Marino added another to help LPHS grab an early 14-10 lead.

Gardiner fought back in the second, thanks in part to seven points from Roberts in the quarter, to outscore Lone Peak by five and enter halftime with a slim, one-point advantage.

A tough third quarter slowed the Big Horns and allowed the Bruins to jump out to a double-digit lead. LPHS was limited to six points,



Lone Peak senior Nolan Schumacher (20) attempts a shot against the Gardiner Bruins in a game earlier this season on Jan. 30. Gardiner defeated Lone Peak in their most recent meeting on Feb. 9, 55-42. PHOTO BY JILL BOUGH

while Gardiner put up 18 of their own and increased their lead to 13. Gardiner’s McDonald and Roberts combined for 14 of those points in the quarter.

The teams finished the final quarter of play in a stalemate, matching one another with 16 points apiece, and the Big Horns were unable to make a comeback.

Neither team reached double-digit free-throw attempts but both shot 50 percent or better on the night. Gardiner held a slight edge, finishing 60 percent as a team, or three-for-five, while LPHS converted four of their eight chances at the line.

In total, the Big Horns knocked down eight 3-pointers against the Bruins and were led offensively by Botha, who finished with a team-high 10 points on the night. Schumacher and Lang each accounted for nine points for LPHS, while freshman Juliusz Shipman scored five.

Hannahs praised junior forward Tony Brester, who he saw looking for shots and helping Lone Peak by grabbing rebounds.

Sitting four games under .500 at 4-8 overall this season, Lone Peak was on track to play its final regular season contest on Feb. 11 hosting the West Yellowstone Wolverines on Senior Night a day after EBS press time. The Big Horns have four seniors on their roster to honor this season.

“I’m excited to see some special things from our seniors and I’m excited for the atmosphere of West Yellowstone,” Hannahs said of the rivalry.

Following that matchup, LPHS will turn its attention to the district tournament slated for Feb. 17-20. COVID-19 precautions have led to the tournament following a similar structure of fall athletics, where higher seeds will host playoff contests rather than playing at a singular, neutral location.



Big Horns’ senior Jackson Lang (5) surveys the court in a game earlier this season against the Gardiner Bruins on Jan. 30. LPHS fell to the Bruins on the road on Feb. 9. PHOTO BY JILL BOUGH

What's the point?

BY AL MALINOWSKI
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

NFL Hall of Fame Coach Bill Parcells is known for having famously stated, "You are what your record says you are." Many sports fans likely agree with Coach Parcells. After all, sports are played to determine who's the winner and who's the loser, while those moral victories won't show up in the standings.

Every once in a while, a team comes along whose chemistry does not fit that narrative. This year, the Lima High School boys basketball team has been establishing themselves as deserving of respect, but not because of their record.

The bus trip to Big Sky from Lima is roughly 200 miles. Lima is located near the Montana-Idaho border, and unless you're lost, there are not many reasons someone leaving Big Sky would pass through Lima on their way to anywhere.

Last Spring, Lima's high school reported an enrollment of 20 total students to the Montana High School Association. For the sake of comparison, Lone Peak High School claimed 109. However, Lima is an example of the resiliency present in so many small Montana towns, that take great pride in maintaining their local school district and their school's athletic programs.

The 2020-21 Lima Bears boy's roster includes five players: five starters, zero subs. If all goes well, each player will play the entire 32 minutes in each basketball game the Bears take the court for. Should anyone get injured or foul out, the team is forced to finish the game short-handed. The Lima basketball team has experienced playing five-on-four several times this season. In some cases, after establishing a commanding lead, their opponents have agreed to remove one player from the action and compete four-against-four.

In the classic movie, Hoosiers, actor Gene Hackman coaches the rural Hickory Huskers basketball team of eight players to the Indiana State Championship. More locally, the outstanding novel by Stanley Gordon West, Blind Your Ponies, follows the Willow Creek High School basketball team of six players to the Montana State Championship. The teams in those stories experienced playing games short-handed, similar to the Lima Bears. Proving that reality is less forgiving than fiction however, the Lima Bears team has yet to win a game this season.

The Lima players certainly understood the challenge they faced when they decided to embark on the season. Unlike the athletes on other high school teams, who likely start the season assessing potential wins on their schedule or jockeying for playing time, the Bears had to realistically wonder if they could make it through the season. Could they win a game was a more appropriate question than how many.

However, the members of the Lima boys basketball team share one important trait with other successful basketball players, their desire to win. One has to admire a team that ignores overwhelming obstacles and finds a way to compete each night.

While I was selfishly pleased it didn't come against our Lone Peak Big Horns this past weekend, I know I join many opposing fans and even some officials who secretly hope the Bears find a way to earn a victory this season. But if that elusive win doesn't come, the team can take solace in the words of an 8-time NCAA Women's Basketball Championship Coach, the late Pat Summit of the Tennessee Lady Volunteers, who believed, "Winning is fun, sure. But winning is not the point. Wanting to win is the point. Not giving up is the point. Never letting up is the point. Never being satisfied with what you've done is the point."

Win or lose, I believe the Lima Bears have made their point.

Al Malinowski has lived in Big Sky for over 25 years. He has coached middle school and high school basketball at the Big Sky School District for 22 of those years. He believes participation in competitive athletics has been critical in establishing his core values.



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Yours in Health

Headaches and migraines

BY DR. ANDREA WICK
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

If you suffer from chronic headaches or migraines it can be debilitating, and there are a number of potential causes that make them difficult to treat.

Tension headaches are caused from muscles in the neck being chronically tight, which can be caused by poor posture, stress, and history of injuries such as whiplash. Migraines, however, are multifaceted and can be triggered by everything from food allergies or sensitivities to stress, muscle tension or hormonal imbalances.

Here are some simple, natural therapies to prevent and treat headaches and migraines:

1. Essential oil therapy can alleviate migraines and headaches. Peppermint and eucalyptus oil help to open the sinuses and nasal passages, while lavender and chamomile oil help to relax muscles, and ease anxiety. When mixed with a carrier oil such as coconut oil, these therapies can be applied to the neck or temple area.
2. Dehydration can cause headaches so drink at least 64 ounces of water daily.
3. Get adequate rest. Insomnia can result in chronic headaches, so sleeping at least 7-8 hours per night will help prevent stress that can contribute to headaches.
4. Avoid processed food and preservatives. Food dyes such as red #40, yellow #5 and #6, are neurotoxins that can irritate the nervous system. Avoid flavor enhancers such as MSG, monosodium glutamate and nitrates found in processed meats such as bacon and hot dogs as well as sulfites found in wine. Hydrogenated oils like fried foods and vegetable oils may also trigger symptoms.
5. Exercise and stretching may help release muscle groups that are chronically tight, and posture-correcting exercises can help align the spine.

6. Body work such as massage, craniosacral therapy and acupuncture can assist in alleviating and preventing symptoms related to headaches. Acupuncture helps open meridians or channels that may be blocked, along with relaxing the musculoskeletal system. Craniosacral therapy and massage help relax the nervous system, musculoskeletal system and reduce stress.
7. Chiropractic care is quite effective at managing pain. Research provided in the Journal of Manipulative Physiological Therapy states that chiropractic care improves migraine and cervicogenic headaches. Adjustments can realign the spine and relax the musculoskeletal system.
8. Hot and cold therapy can draw excess heat out of the head. Applying a cold compress on the forehead and warm compress on the feet can help improve symptoms.
9. Magnesium glycinate can relieve headache and migraine symptoms; taking 350 milligrams before bed may be most effective. It's difficult to get enough magnesium in the diet, so supplementing is a great option.
10. Stress-reducing techniques such as meditation, breath work, boundary work and taking vacations when needed will help decrease excess stress and help calm the nervous system. Cognitive behavior therapy is also an option, especially for individuals with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Having untreated PTSD can result in an increased risk of contracting migraines.

I hope you find these suggestions helpful. Symptoms left untreated may indicate a more serious health problem so always check with your doctor if you have chronic headaches or migraines.

Dr. Andrea Wick is a chiropractor and applied kinesiologist. She graduated from Life University in Marietta, Georgia, and now practices in Big Sky. She has a passion for holistic health care and being active in the outdoors, and her practice, Healing Hands Chiropractic, is located in Big Sky's Meadow Village Center. Visit drandreawick.com to learn more.

CHECK OUT OUR SPECIAL EVENTS!

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2/13, 2:00-4:30pm

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7:00-8:00pm Body Melt	4:15-5:15pm Apres Ski Yoga	9:00-10:00am Warrior Flow Yoga	10:00-11:15am All Levels Yoga	9:00-10:00am All Levels Vinyasa Flow Yoga	5:45-7:00pm All Levels Kundalini Yoga	5:00-6:15pm All Levels Yoga
		Noon-1:00pm Lunch Break All Levels Yoga	4:15-5:15pm Apres Ski Yoga	Noon-1:00pm Lunchbreak All Levels Yoga		
		5:45-7:00pm Heated Flow	5:45-6:45pm Restorative Yoga	5:45-6:45pm Heated Flow		

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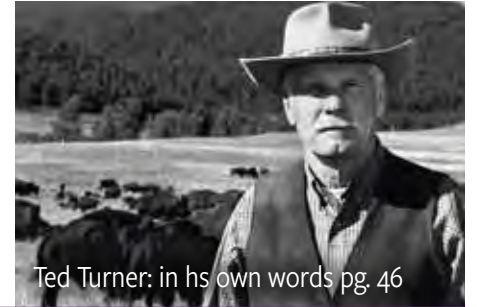
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Experience the WMPAC escape room pg. 35



Rocky Mountain elk tomatoe sauce pg. 42



Ted Turner: in hs own words pg. 46



Making it in Big Sky: Michaelangelo's Ristorante Italiano

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – Siblings Emily and Michael Annandonono have both worked in restaurants since they were 15. In 2006, they became the owners of a restaurant in Cleveland, Ohio's Little Italy neighborhood called Michaelangelo's Ristorante. On March 2, 2016, they opened a restaurant of that same name in Big Sky, Montana.

Michael originally discovered Big Sky when he ventured out west to stay with his business partner and hit the slopes. Five years ago, they opened Michaelangelo's in Big Sky and asked Emily if she would come out west to be the general manager.

Michaelangelo's is an authentic Italian restaurant offering up a variety of dishes from northern Italy. Head chef and owner Michael will also occasionally branch out and create his own dishes. He trained in the Piedmont region of Italy and has collected many accolades to his name.

The fifth anniversary of the restaurant's tenure in Big Sky is approaching but with the coronavirus pandemic still gripping the country, Emily explained they will hold off on a party. She said they will celebrate when the pandemic is over.

Although there won't be an anniversary bash, Michaelangelo's is still open for business seven days a week. Explore Big Sky talked with Emily to get the scoop on Michaelangelo's menu and a peek behind-the-scenes of running a restaurant.

Explore Big Sky: *What makes your restaurant special?*

Emily Annandonono: "Well, my brother actually trained in Italy to be a chef. He trained under the master chef in Piedmont. And our food's really authentic to northern Italy. That's not something you get all the time."

EBS: *What is your favorite item on the menu?*

EA: "My favorite is probably the Pappardelle Alla Bolognese."

EBS: *Has it been difficult adapting your operations during COVID-19?*

EA: "It's been hard. It's changing a lot, once we get used to something, it changes again so that's been difficult. We've been very blessed here because our staff is amazing. I don't know what I would do if I didn't have my staff here. We're just trying to roll with it, whatever new regulations come out, we

are trying to keep everyone safe, my staff, my customers, everybody. Any new thing they throw at us we're just adding it in. It's kind of reinventing the wheel, sanitation has always been a big priority, but this is taking it to the next level. Whatever they throw at us we're just adapting to it. We're lucky because we have this huge restaurant. So, for us to be able to spread everybody out and have everything six feet apart—we can still get enough people in here, which is nice, and make everyone feel very comfortable here."

EBS: *What is your favorite part of working at Michaelangelo's?*

EA: "It's been really fun doing this with my brother. We hadn't worked together since 2007 on this level and it's been really fun to work with him and do this with him. My other favorite part is my staff. All of them have become really good friends of mine. We have a good time no matter what's going on."

EBS: *Do you have a favorite memory from your time working in Big Sky?*

EA: "My favorite memory was actually our grand opening party. I moved here ... about six months before we opened, and I was here for all of the construction. We did the grand opening party the first week we were open. We invited all these people, and we had a big open house, and it was just so fun to see it all come together. After being here for six months with construction and everything else it's probably my favorite thing, all of a sudden it was happening."

EBS: *Do you have any notable regulars?*

EA: "I have a family that comes in, more

recently they've been staying here longer because they're second homeowners, and they come in every Saturday. I don't even have to ask what they want to drink or anything I just bring it over. You know, and they usually order about the same thing when they come in."

EBS: *How do you decide what goes on your menu?*

EA: "Some of the items are very traditional Northern Italian dishes, or just Italian dishes. We have some dishes from a little further south. Some dishes are just creations that my brother has made. We have both of those, it's pretty much up to Michael, he creates the menus."

EBS: *What is the best business advice that you have ever received?*

EA: "The best advice I ever got is to always be fair and honest to both staff and customers, and as far as staff goes, never expect anyone to do any job that you wouldn't do yourself."



Emily and Michael Annandonono have both been in the restaurant business for most of their adult lives. They run Michaelangelo's Ristorante Italiano together and the restaurant's five year anniversary is coming up on March 2. PHOTO BY GREEN DOOR PHOTOGRAPHY

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Experience the WMPAC escape room



WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

BIG SKY – Now that it is in its eighth winter season, the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center has a lot of different types of performances under its belt. The center has hosted ballet, comedy, percussion and a slew of creative virtual shows since the onset of the pandemic. However, its newest endeavor is certainly the most creative take on a night out at the theater—and possibly the most fun yet.

From Feb. 10 through Feb. 24, WMPAC will transform into a large-scale interactive game, akin to an escape room. The game is called “Through the Fourth Wall,” and was designed in part by the same team that created Big Sky Resort’s own escape room last year.

Creative team Jason McDowell-Green, Maya Davis, Alejandro Fajardo and Ben Truppin-Brown arrived in Big Sky last week, and immediately got to work transforming the stage into a life-size series of puzzles. “We get to use all the elements of theater that aren’t normally in those small spaces, like an escape room,” said McDowell-Green, who has designed numerous escape rooms around the country. “Here we get to use state of the art lighting and sound, so ... even if traditional theater isn’t for you, coming to this space now and being immersed in a really rich world that’s created for you is exciting.”

The game is designed for one pod of four to eight people at a time. When a group arrives at the theater, they’ll be treated to refreshments from the Hungry Moose, and then will kick off the experience. The creative team will be offstage to give hints to the puzzles if needed, but guests will have the theater entirely to themselves. The game is accessible for all ages, and is designed to last an hour.

“This is a perfect experience for families or a pod of friends,” said John Zirkle, WMPAC’s executive director. “It’s a really fun night out in a fully COVID-safe environment, since you’re only interacting with your own group. We’re turning the entire theater experience on its head and pushing the limits of this space, and I can’t wait to share this with Big Sky.”

Timeslots are available at 5 p.m., 7 p.m., and 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays from Feb. 10 through Feb. 24. The game will be reset and the theater fully sanitized in between groups. Groups can be four to eight people, and tickets for each timeslot are \$100, regardless of group size.

Tickets and more information are available at warrenmillerpac.org.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 100 colonies estimated in 2015 in Yellowstone National Park
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BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, Feb. 12 – Thursday, Feb. 25

If your event falls between Feb. 26 and March. 11, please submit it by Feb. 24 by emailing media@outlaw.partners

Friday, Feb. 12

Through the 4th Wall (through Feb. 24)
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, 5, 7 and 9 p.m.

Friday Afternoon Club: Brian Stumph
Blue Buddha Sushi Lounge, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 13

Saturday Sweat
Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.

406 Marketplace
Gallatin Valley Mall, 11 a.m.

Sunday, Feb. 14 – Valentine's Day

Twisted Trivia
Bar IX, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

Masquerade Murder Mystery
Devil's Toboggan, 6 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 15 – President's Day

Trivia
Pinky G's Pizzeria, 7 p.m.

Sunrise Karaoke
American Legion, Bozeman, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 16

Bingo Night
Molly Brown, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

Live music: Rich Mayo
Kountry Korner Café, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 17

Glide Big Sky
South Fork Loop, 2 p.m.

Educator Wednesdays
Bunkhouse Brewery, Bozeman, 2 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 18

Thursday Night Ice Climbers
Hyalite Canyon, 6 p.m.

Live Poker
Cat's Paw, Bozeman, 3 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 19

Cross Country Ski Club
Battle Ridge Trail, Bozeman, 12 p.m.

Friday Afternoon Club: Kevin Fabozzi
Consignment Cabin, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 20

Saturday Sweat
Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.

Bozeman Winter Farmer's Market
Gallatin County Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Sunday, Feb. 21

Twisted Trivia
Bar IX, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

FUNSKI Community Nordic Ski Series
Virtual Event, Register Here: bridgerskifoundation.org/events/funski

Monday, Feb. 22

Auction for the Arts Fundraiser (through Feb. 27)
Lone Peak Cinema, 9 a.m.

Trivia
Pinky G's Pizzeria, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 23

Adult Puck Lunch
Haynes Pavilion, Bozeman, 11 a.m.

Service Industry Night
Blend Wine Bar, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 24

Unconditional Love Sound Bath
Santosha Wellness, 7:30 p.m.

Educator Wednesdays
Bunkhouse Brewery, Bozeman, 2 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 25

Thursday Night Ice Climbers
Hyalite Canyon, 6 p.m.

Pure Barre Pop Up Class
Blend Wine Bar, Bozeman, 4 p.m.

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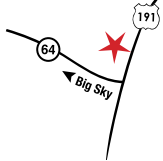
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You've moved to Montana and are ready to buy a home. Now what?

BY PATRICK STRAUB

The statistics don't lie: Bozeman, the Gallatin Valley and Big Sky are growing at rates well above national averages. These growth rates, many of them exponential, also buck several of the trends occurring nationally due to COVID-19. Median home price, median household income and unemployment rates in Bozeman, the Gallatin Valley and Big Sky all beat national averages. Clearly, this place has been discovered.

Many new residents are coming from places more akin to air conditioning and real-time traffic reports, not winter storm warnings and roads slicker than Gordon Gecko's Wall Street hairdo. The desire to buy a home or condo is high for these new residents, but most are lacking some boots-on-the-ground know-how.

"We are local. Everything we do is based on our knowledge of local markets, HOAs and trade partners," says Elex McAlear, a real estate loan officer with Big Sky's First Security Bank. "From the new regulatory requirements from COVID-19, to understanding Big Sky's unique seasonal economy, our decision process is all local."

With world-class downhill ski resorts, hundreds of miles of cross-country ski trails, snowmobile access and even winter fly fishing, finding winter recreation in Bozeman, Big Sky and the Gallatin Valley is easy. For homeowners, however, preparing a home that's safe and incident free is as important as finding the next stash of powder.

"Winter makes an already tight housing market more interesting," adds McAlear. "With our decades of experience, we work with the best appraisers and best



Just like your lawn mower, be sure to have your snow blower tuned up once a year. PHOTO COURTESY OF FIRST SECURITY BANK



Large amounts of snow should be removed in order to prevent ice dams and reduce excess weight. PHOTO COURTESY OF FIRST SECURITY BANK

local inspectors to keep the homebuying process on time and on track, but the homebuyer still needs to be aware of some winter preparations."

If a new home has a woodstove, gas fireplace or wood fireplace, get it inspected and learn its maintenance. It is also a good idea to have a generator and gas to run it. Ensure all air vents are clear and unobstructed and test smoke/carbon monoxide alarms. For residents that are accustomed to living in areas where roads are regularly plowed, have at least a week's worth of canned goods and water in case issues arise after a major storm.

From big things—mitigating snow load on roofs, ensuring gutters and sashes can sustain wind gusts, or installing ice-dam prevention systems—to the little things, like keeping rodents out of pantries and vehicles, living in Big Sky and the Gallatin Valley in winter can be a dish served cold if homebuyers are not prepared.

Even longtime residents of the area may need to escape winter's grip on occasion. When they do travel and plan to be gone longer than a few days, veterans of Montana winters take a few necessary precautions because snowfall and temperatures can vary greatly from week to week.

"Many of our homeowners have a plan in place if they are going to be gone," says McAlear. "We know that while they're gone if their HOA will shovel snow on sidewalks or roofs—yes, we get that much snow in Big Sky."

"We've been through dozens of Montana winters," says McAlear. "We want our customer's first winter in Montana to be memorable for all the right reasons."

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If you live in a CenturyLink service area, please call 1-800-201-4099 or visit centurylink.com/lifeline with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline program.



EVENTS INCLUDE

Feb 22-23: 12-7
Feb 24-27: 12-4
Artwork Preview
Open House - Free
at Lone Peak Cinema

Feb 24-26: 5/6:30/8
Artwork Preview Parties
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Heather Rapp
Tabby Ivy
and many, many more!

Feb 27: 7-8
Online Livestream - Free
Arts Council Celebration

Online Bidding Opens:
Feb 22, 9:00am
Online Bidding Closes:
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Big Sky Resort Area District

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Cultivate Ongoing Development
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Proactively Plan and Adapt



ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY

Foster Public Engagement
Create Community Awareness



STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Invest in Identified Community Needs
Foster Strategic Collaborations
Require Accountability

STRATEGIC PLAN FY21-FY23

CORE VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY: We keep our word, follow through with commitments, and hold partners to the same standard.

COLLABORATION: We seek partnership in all endeavors and believe it results in the best possible outcomes.

STEWARDSHIP: We lead by example, taking care of Big Sky's people, economy, and natural environment.

ENGAGEMENT: We recognize the power civic engagement plays in a healthy community.

INCLUSION: We strive to create opportunities for community involvement for all who reside in Big Sky.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

FAIRNESS: We speak honestly, directly, and kindly within and about our community.

THOROUGH: We are detail oriented and evaluate all perspectives.

LEGAL: We operate only within the constraints of the law.

PROACTIVE: We are forward thinking and will lead and follow as necessary.

RESPONSIBLE: We operate strategically in order to maximize the resources within our community.

OUR VISION

"Big Sky is BETTER TOGETHER as a result of wise investments, an engaged community, and the pursuit of excellence."

The detailed plan can be view at:

<https://resorttax.org/about/governing-documents/strategic-plan/>

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Visit BigSkyRelief.org for more information.

Did you know...

The District recently negotiated agreements with Airbnb & VRBO to collect on behalf of short-term rentals within the District, ensuring 100% compliance.



Rocky Mountain elk tomato sauce

BY MIRA BRODY

I don't hunt, but I make friends with the right people. I earned some elk meat from a coworker this fall and decided to put it to good use. I've had some bad experiences experimenting with elk meat in the past—flavor was off, too gamey, elk steak is just ... weird—so I was a bit nervous to do anything too fancy. I'm a fan of sustainably harvested food of any kind, and a fan of anything that claims to be low in fat and high in protein. I settled on a basic elk tomato-based pasta sauce. With only six spices, it's hard to mess up. After playing around with measurements, here's the recipe I crafted.

Ingredients

- 1 Pound ground elk meat
- 1 Medium onion, minced (yellow or white)
- 5 Large cloves of garlic, minced
- 16 oz. can of tomato sauce
- 2 Teaspoons dried oregano
- 2 Teaspoons dried basil
- 2 Teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon black pepper (1 teaspoon if you like more of a kick)

Instructions

Prep time: 30 minutes
Cook time: 1-3 hours
Serves five

1. In large stockpot, cook elk meat at medium/high until almost browned, stirring frequently.
2. Add minced onions and garlic and cook until meat is thoroughly browned and crumbly. Your dog should have peered their head into the kitchen by now—the meat will smell good.
3. Add spices and stir thoroughly until fragrant.
4. Turn heat down to medium, add tomato sauce and mix well. Ideally you should let it simmer for an hour or two hours to let seasonings permeate, but if you're in a rush, it still tastes great right away. Leftovers will also marinate overnight in the refrigerator.

Serve over your favorite pasta—to stick to the locally sourced theme, I went with Country Foods' egg pasta from Polson, MT—and some shaved Parmesan and fresh basil. Pairs well with garlic bread, dry red wine and a crackling fireplace.



Homemade elk pasta sauce pairs well with parmesan, fresh basil, dry red wine and a crackling fireplace. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY

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.

It's a real trade



BY SCOTT MECHURA
EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

For years, and long before I was a leader, when I would tell someone what I did for a living—that I was a line cook—it was inevitably met with the same response: "oh." This "oh" was accompanied by a humdrum look and even sometimes an exit strategy to physically remove themselves from the conversation. Or, at the very least, a subject change.

It was as if I didn't have what can be offensively referred to as a "real job."

For those who may not know, a line cook is the person in a kitchen who works on well, a line. The "line" in this case is the aisle of kitchen equipment where people are responsible for a certain dish or menu item that gets cooked each time someone places an order. Each line cook is assigned to a station.

Over the years, and as I have been able to move into positions of management, and then leadership, I've had many conversations with fellow chefs about how a line cook is not only a real job, but it is a real trade that comes with all the challenges of a mason, carpenter, electrician, roofer, lineman, roughneck or any other position in which you work with your brain, use your whole body, endure outside elements, and are very aware that at the end of the shift, you have put in a hard days work.

This seems like a simple enough job to do. After all, many people love to cook. It's fun, it's relaxing, you enjoy a glass of wine or a cocktail, put on your favorite playlist and have some friends over. What could be so hard?

On your feet. You are on your feet for hours on end with barely a moment to sit. There's an old joke that there are no chairs in a kitchen. You are constantly moving, which involves turning, bending, squatting and many other movements, sometimes in unison and hundreds of times during a shift.

It's hot. Many people work outside in the hot sun, or in the frigid cold of winter. This can be even harder when you bounce back and forth from hot to cold, which is common in a kitchen. I've seen kitchen lines in Texas reach over 120 degrees and still maintain humidity. I don't care where you're from—that's a hot work environment.

It's back breaking at times. Whether you are working the line in a Cheesecake Factory, private club, or a fine dining establishment in Midtown Manhattan, many things are universal. You stand on your feet all day, you lift up to 50 pounds at a time throughout the day, you twist, you turn, you squat, and you bend over to reach and pick up things too many times to count.

It's a physical toll. Over time, many seasoned line cooks and chefs who have put in years of hard work suffer from carpal tunnel, fallen arches, varicose veins, back, neck and knee problems, and long lasting mental stress issues.

Line cooking is mostly mental. Many people unfamiliar with the position will tell you they would make a good line cook because they love to cook at home. Nothing could be further from reality. I jokingly respond that I am capable of changing the oil in my vehicle, but that doesn't mean I would be a successful mechanic. A line cook works primarily in a reactive, as opposed to proactive, state of mind. A ticket comes in off of a printer and each line cook must quickly decipher the shorthand lingo on the ticket, recognize which items they are responsible for, prioritize them, then prioritize that ticket with, at times, several additional tickets in a long line. On top of that, the clock is always ticking as the customer is waiting for their meal.

You work with your hands. I know, as if other occupations or tradesmen don't. But from a variety of kitchen tools requiring dexterity and hand to eye coordination, to the constant repetition of hand work, like plating, where your goals are to simultaneously be neat, clean and refined, to doing everything you can to be efficient and minimize your steps.

You have to be present. If a tile layer or electrician doesn't show up, his work simply gets delayed to another day. But in a restaurant, the doors still open, the guests still come, and the workload doesn't change. This means if you aren't there, the rest of your team must pick up your workload as well as their own tasks. As a diner, you never know if the kitchen is missing a team member and there is a shorthanded crew picking up the tasks in the kitchen.

When all of these things are happening, when everyone is on point and synchronized, it is truly a thing of beauty.

Scott Mechura has spent a life in the hospitality industry. He is a former certified beer judge and currently the multi-concept culinary director for a Bozeman based restaurant group.

American Life in Poetry: Column 828

BY TED KOOSER,
U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

Here's a lovely poem about snow falling on San Antonio by Mo H. Saidi, an obstetrician and writer who, in addition to his medical training, has a Master's degree in English and Literature from Harvard.

The Night of the Snowfall

Snow falls gently in the Hill Country covering the meadows and the valleys. The sluggish streaks of smoke climb quietly from the roofs but fail to reach the lazy clouds.

On Alamo Plaza in the heart of the night and under the flood of lights, the flakes float like frozen moths and glow like fireflies. They drop on the blades of dormant grass.

They alight on the cobblestones and live awhile in silence, they dissolve before dawn. The wet limestone walls of the mission glow proudly after the night of snowfall.

American Life in Poetry provides newspapers and online publications with a free weekly column featuring contemporary American poems. The sole mission of this project is to promote poetry: American Life in Poetry seeks to create a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. There are no costs for reprinting the columns; we do require that you register your publication here and that the text of the column be reproduced without alteration.

Corner Quote

“We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men or women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe.”

– Elie Wiesel during his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech on Dec. 10, 1986

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

<p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Aid to Dependent Children (abbr.)</p> <p>4 Ancient</p> <p>7 Helper</p> <p>10 Idea (Fr.)</p> <p>11 Pro</p> <p>12 Coagulated substance</p> <p>14 Small goby</p> <p>15 Flotage</p> <p>17 Parent-Teacher Assn. (abbr.)</p> <p>18 Name</p> <p>19 River into the North Sea</p> <p>20 Raise</p> <p>22 Sp. article</p> <p>24 Moon goddess</p> <p>27 Medieval goblet</p> <p>31 Part of a keel</p> <p>32 Possessive pronoun</p> <p>34 Macho</p> <p>35 Ger. spa</p> <p>37 Fortification</p>	<p>39 Ribbed fabric</p> <p>41 Scand. people</p> <p>42 Summer (Fr.)</p> <p>45 Of birth</p> <p>47 Interstate Commerce Commission (abbr.)</p> <p>50 Round Table knight</p> <p>52 Wings</p> <p>53 Fare</p> <p>54 Amer. Ballet Theatre (abbr.)</p> <p>55 Dandy</p> <p>56 Resin</p> <p>57 Verily</p> <p>58 Full of (suf.)</p>	<p>ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE</p> <p>LOAD A H A B M R S</p> <p>A K H A R A G A E O E</p> <p>N A S I A B I R R I M</p> <p>L I B S I N G L E</p> <p>A R S D E B S E A</p> <p>M A I A L E C A N A G</p> <p>I S M E L I O T S S E</p> <p>R E P P A G U A E A R</p> <p>A H A E N A R P M</p> <p>S A T I R E T L C</p> <p>A L I E L B E R A M A</p> <p>A E C T B L S U B E R</p> <p>L E O E A T S S A G A</p>
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<p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Malay law</p> <p>2 Gone</p> <p>3 Chief executive officer (abbr.)</p> <p>4 Natal (2 words)</p> <p>5 Boor</p>	<p>6 Risible</p> <p>7 Circuit Court of Appeals (abbr.)</p> <p>8 Ger. theologian</p> <p>9 Leader (Ital.)</p> <p>10 Urchin</p> <p>13 Fucus</p> <p>16 Affirmative</p>	<p>18 Sailor</p> <p>21 Avid</p> <p>23 Pac. island</p> <p>24 Asbestos (abbr.)</p> <p>25 Jamaican dance music</p> <p>26 Shak. contraction</p> <p>28 Chambered mollusk</p> <p>29 Vestment</p> <p>30 Caress</p> <p>33 Boat race</p> <p>36 Haw. goose</p> <p>38 Delaware (abbr.)</p> <p>40 Rice in the husk</p> <p>42 Pixie</p> <p>43 Asian weight</p> <p>44 Sicilian resort</p> <p>46 Afr. cotton garment</p> <p>48 Eur. juniper</p> <p>49 Curved letter</p> <p>51 Centers for Disease Control (abbr.)</p> <p>52 Commotion</p>
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BIG SKY BEATS

“Rocky Mountain High”

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

The folk-rock song “Rocky Mountain High” by John Denver, one of Colorado’s two official state songs, was released in 1972. In 1973, the song rose to number nine on the US Hot 100 list and the song is lauded as one of the Top 100 Western songs of all time by Western Writers of America. Denver told concert audiences that the song took him an unusually long time to write, nine months in fact.



Jim (16) and John Denver (28) at the sound check for a concert at Kearney State College, Kearney Nebraska in the fall of 1972. Photo by Brian Schrack

At the Jan. 30 TEDxBigSky event, Jim Salestrom shared the story of his first time hearing the song, which incidentally, was the first time that Denver played the song in concert. On June 21, 1972, a 16-year-old Jim Salestrom was working for a sound company that was running sound at the Red Rocks Amphitheater for John Denver. On that day, he met his personal hero and Denver played “Rocky Mountain High” for Salestrom that afternoon a few times before the concert.

That evening under a harvest moon, Denver played his next greatest hit to 9,000 people for the first time and Salestrom recalled that, “everybody there went nuts, they all knew that they were witnessing something special.”

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*The rankings are based on data provided by thousands of advisors. Factors included in the rankings were assets under management, revenue produced for the firm, regulatory record and client retention.

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Forbes Best-In-State Wealth Advisors Methodology 2020

The Forbes ranking of Best-In-State Wealth Advisors, developed by SHOOK Research, is based on an algorithm of qualitative criteria, mostly gained through telephone and in-person due diligence interviews, and quantitative data. Those advisors that are considered have a minimum of seven years experience, and the algorithm weights factors like revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, industry experience and those that encompass best practices in their practices and approach to working with clients. Portfolio performance is not a criterion due to varying client objectives and lack of audited data. Neither Forbes or SHOOK receive a fee in exchange for rankings.

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BACK40

For Explore Big Sky, the Back 40 is a resource: a place where we can delve into subjects and ask experts to share their knowledge. Here, we highlight stories from our flagship sister publication Mountain Outlaw magazine.

Noun: wild or rough terrain adjacent to a developed area **Origin:** shortened form of “back 40 acres”

Ted Turner: In his own words

The Mountain Outlaw Interview

BY JOSEPH T. O’CONNOR

To many, Ted Turner, the adopted Montanan dwelling in our own backyard, is a bit of a mystery, a man who has led two lives. The Cincinnati, Ohio, native cut his teeth on business ventures of near-epic proportions. He founded the CNN and TBS television networks, owned the World Series-winning Atlanta Braves, and for a time headed the World Championship Wrestling company. A fiercely competitive media mogul with a tongue capable of setting the room ablaze, Turner earned a reputation for being as tenacious as his 61-foot racing yacht of the same name that won the infamous Fastnet Race in 1979.

But in the late ‘70s another side of Turner began to emerge. A mentor to Turner, one Jacques Cousteau, helped impart in him a notion of altruism. Indeed, Turner saw Cousteau the explorer and conservationist as a leader of men. “The Captain should rightfully be considered the [environmental] movement’s father,” he once said. In 1977, Turner read a report commissioned by President Jimmy Carter outlining the dire straits the world was facing. Without comprehensive change, the report noted, these problems could spin out of control.

“It drove home the point to me, for the first time in my life, that, as a businessperson, the decisions I make can either contribute to making problems for the Earth worse, or they can help me advance a solution,” Turner told writer Todd Wilkinson in the 2013 book “Last Stand: Ted Turner’s Quest to Save a Troubled Planet.”

These days, the entrepreneur-turned-mogul-turned-philanthropist is worth \$2.2 billion. He still wears his moustache reminiscent of Clark Gable in “Gone with the Wind” and puts his time and a famously restless energy into searching for solutions to the biggest issues facing the world today. Turner has founded five foundations, including the Turner Endangered Species Fund, and the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

In 1997, he pledged \$1 billion to the United Nations, which, in turn, launched the United Nations Foundation dedicated to tackling worldwide concerns, among them global poverty, climate change, women’s empowerment and energy access. The event, in fact, was a challenge to other wealthy individuals to give more, and it resonated with the likes of Bill and Melinda Gates, as well as Warren Buffett.

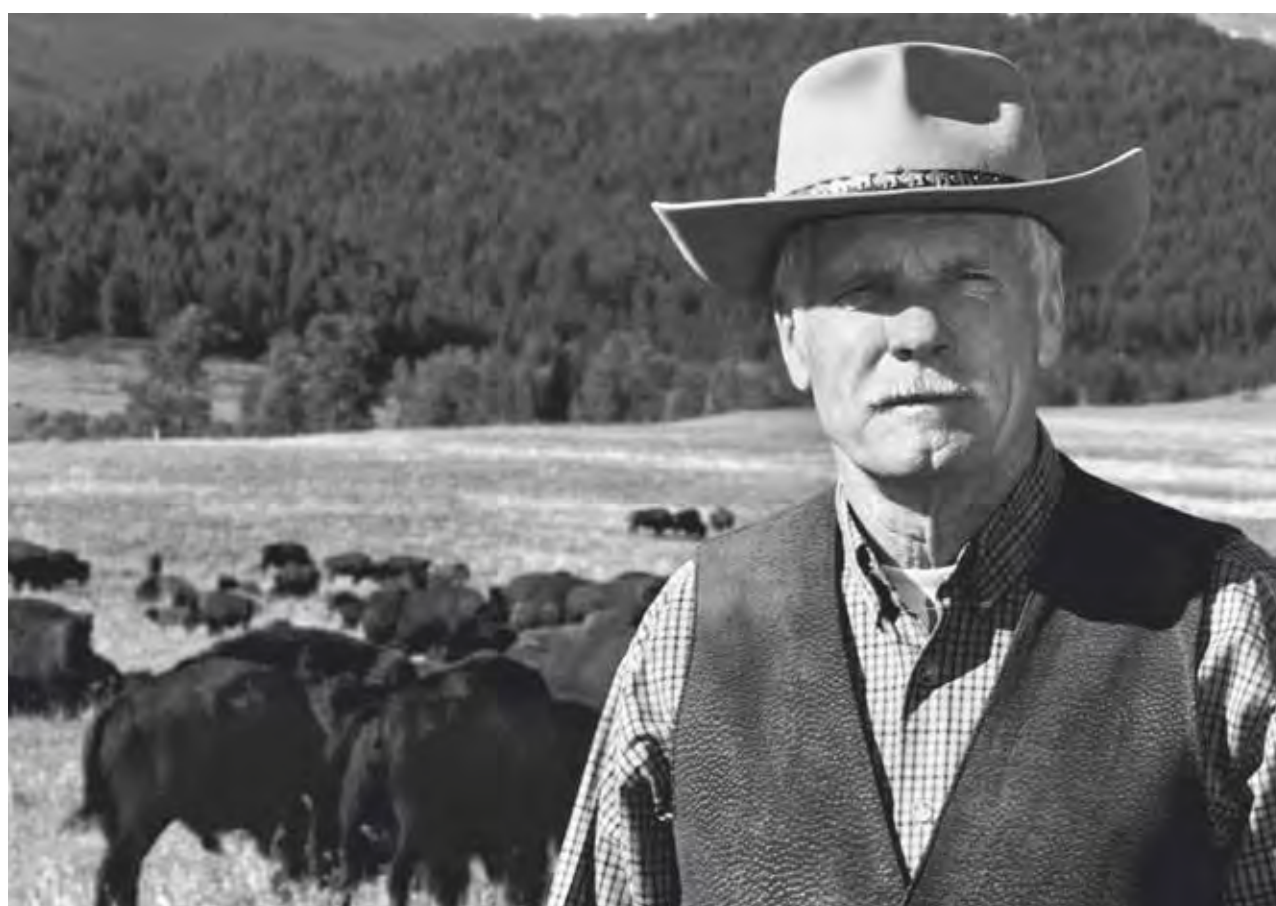


PHOTO BY ROGER MOENKS

Turner, who turned 78 in November, is the second-largest private landowner in America, and has put much of it in conservation easements, ensuring its natural existence in perpetuity. He owns 15 ranches in the western U.S., of which four are in Montana. The 113,600-acre Flying D between Bozeman and Big Sky is managed for wildlife and bison. Turner is dedicated to the West, its land and its native animals, owning the world’s largest private bison herd. But he’s also loyal to bettering the world at large.

The one-time “Mouth of the South” (don’t call him that) has made an impact on sustainability and environmentalism considered among the most impressive in modern history. He’s been called a provocateur, a capitalist, a crusader. One thing you can call him: humanitarian.

Turner granted Mountain Outlaw an exclusive interview in November. Here are his words.

Mountain Outlaw: *You bought your flagship Montana ranch, the Flying D, in 1989 and from there grew your landholdings in the U.S. and Argentina to more than 2 million acres, and expanded your bison herd to more than 51,000. Few people imagined this could be done. How do you feel about it looking back?*

Ted Turner: I’m proud of what we have accomplished; it’s been a real team effort. In the beginning, I was on a steep learning curve because we set out to do something that had never been done before: bring back bison on a massive scale. In order to do that, we needed a lot of land. Fortunately, I had the economic resources to acquire properties that could accommodate an expanding herd. Now, here we are decades later and the bison is our national mammal.

M.O.: *You were excited when a wolf pack began denning at the Flying D, and it now sounds like a sow grizzly and her cubs are living fairly close to your house. Are you equally as excited about having bears living not far from your backdoor?*

T.T.: I hired Mike Phillips, who previously led the effort in the mid-‘90s to restore wolves to Yellowstone Park, to oversee the daily operations of the Turner Endangered Species Fund. He told me that if we provided habitat on the Flying D, the wolves of Yellowstone would eventually find their way to the ranch. When wolves established a pack, I was overjoyed. I think we may have been one of the first, if not the first, ranch in the West to lay out a welcome mat for wolves! I have literally howled to wolves off the back deck of my house with my family and friends.

I also hoped the Flying D could provide a home for grizzlies. In the past several months, we received reports that a sow with cubs had taken up residence in the ranch interior. I was pretty excited. Wolves and grizzlies have reputations that are far worse than the reality, but if you give them room to roam, we can live with them peacefully. I’m proud to say that my home in Montana is also their home.

M.O.: *When you arrived in Montana, development was really starting to take off and the easement you placed on the Flying D was one of the largest of its kind. Had the ranch not been protected and instead sold as a real estate play, it would look very different today, and you left a lot of money on the table by embracing conservation. What motivated you?*

T.T.: Respect for nature and the environment. In so many parts of the country, wildlife is getting crowded out by people and development. When

I first laid eyes on the Flying D, it didn't take me long to realize how special it is; and I knew that if it wasn't protected, it would turn into a giant suburb of Bozeman, just as other parts of the Gallatin Valley have. I view land ownership this way: What's important is not only what you take away from the land, but also what you do to make sure these lands endure over time.

M.O.: *In Wilkinson's book, you make the analogy that the world is currently in the seventh inning and the home team is down by a couple of runs; that now is the time to rally. What keeps you up at night?*

T.T.: Potential nuclear dangers are my top concern. The U.S. and Russia still have large nuclear arsenals pointing at each other, and we must also consider what North Korea is capable of. Human or computer error could trigger an event that leads to an exchange of nuclear weapons, and it would be catastrophic. [Former U.S. Senator] Sam Nunn and I founded the Nuclear Threat Initiative in 2002 to address these issues, and NTI is doing some outstanding work. After nukes, I would say climate change, addressing human poverty and population growth, and loss of biodiversity rank right up there. Many of these issues are so interrelated, and I should note they all have environmental components. Degraded environments cause people and countries to become desperate, and when you're desperate, you don't always behave rationally.

M.O.: *In your forward to Wilkinson's book, you write that one "...can be a tree hugger and still have [one's] name appear in Forbes." In your opinion, why do people tend to compartmentalize these concepts into two separate schools of thought?*

T.T.: It's a myth that in order to make money, you have to trash the environment or that if you protect the environment, it's going to cost our nation in lost economic productivity. That mentality should have faded long ago, and truthfully, when it comes to the current state of our environment, we can't afford to think that way anymore.

M.O.: *What's a good day for Ted Turner like in the Wild West?*

T.T.: When I'm in Montana, I'm usually up before dawn to exercise. After breakfast, I might fish or take a drive around the ranch to see the wildlife. When I'm out in nature doing the things I love, it energizes me and allows me to think more clearly. I don't own a cell phone, so I don't have to remind myself to unplug when I'm on the ranch, but I encourage my family and friends to do so when they visit. Otherwise, they can't fully unwind and appreciate what Montana has to offer.

M.O.: *One of your more recent entrepreneurial endeavors is Ted Turner Expeditions (TTX), which launched in 2015, and allows visitors to explore and stay overnight on some of your properties. How did the idea for ecotourism evolve and what kind of a reception has it had?*

T.T.: The response has already been phenomenal. The idea started at my largest property, Vermejo Park Ranch (585,000 acres) in northern New Mexico, which functioned as a guest ranch before I bought it in 1996. People had been going to Vermejo to hunt and fish for years, and at one time, the National Park Service even considered turning it into a national park, so the public interest was already in place on that property. At Vermejo, we just expanded upon our ecotour offerings and added an ultra-luxury accommodation option by opening my home, Casa Grande, to guests this past year. But for both the Ladder Ranch and Sierra Grande Lodge & Spa in southern New Mexico, we had to start from scratch when it came to renovating existing structures, creating a menu of tour offerings and building a team of dedicated associates who believe in the TTX vision.

I've made substantial investments in conservation on my landholdings, and TTX is a way for guests to witness the effects of this and enjoy the lands, while knowing the money they've spent is going back into our environmental protection projects. Over time, we'll probably expand to some of my other properties, but for now we're focused on making sure we do it right.

M.O.: *Your Ted's Montana Grill in Bozeman is among four dozen such restaurants, based in part on the idea of serving bison on the menu. I've heard that the Bozeman Ted's is one of the most popular. Why do you think that is?*

T.T.: Well for one, the food is delicious! If you haven't eaten there yet, you must stop by and have a bison cheeseburger on me. Ted's is in downtown Bozeman, and for many folks, it has become a local favorite. No matter which city and state, all of our 46 restaurants pride themselves on supporting their local communities.

M.O.: *Between your days spent sailing and as an angler and a conservationist, water has been a resounding theme in your life. Considering the droughts in*



Turner at the Flying D Ranch south of Bozeman, Montana, in 2013. PHOTO BY ELENA CIZMARIC

California and the role climate change has on rising sea levels, talk about the importance of preserving earth's most valuable resource.

T.T.: This is a good question. My kids and I think a lot about climate change and how their kids are going to deal with the consequences, especially if we continue to do so little to address it. I'm trying hard to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. On my properties, we're doing what we can to keep our forests and grasslands healthy so they will absorb carbon. We've also expanded our investments in solar power so that we can generate enough clean energy to provide electricity for thousands of homes. I choose to be an optimist when it comes to human potential.

M.O.: *You won the America's Cup as a sailor, Emmys and Oscar nominations for TV programming and films you greenlit, and you won a World Series when you owned the Atlanta Braves. Of all the things you've done, what gives you the most satisfaction?*

T.T.: First and foremost, my children and grandchildren give me the most satisfaction any person could ever hope for. They bring me so much joy, and I'm grateful that they're all doing their part to make this world a better place for generations to come.

I'm also proud of the efforts my colleagues and I made to win those trophies because they are noteworthy accomplishments. But I'm proudest of what we've done to protect and preserve our lands and species on them, as well as my foundations' efforts to improve the lives of people around the world.

M.O.: *You talk about the impacts that great Americans including Henry David Thoreau, Orson Welles and Andrew Carnegie have had on your life. How have these influences affected your dedication to philanthropy?*

T.T.: When TBS started to become really profitable, I attended a seminar on philanthropy in Washington, D.C., where I learned how forming a family foundation can bring parents and their children together. At that time, I was working long hours building my company, which unfortunately took me away from my children more than I would have liked. So, the Turner Foundation was and is a great vehicle to contribute to my community and other organizations, while also spending quality time with my family.

Each year, I set aside a certain amount of money to give away and meet with all five of my children to decide how to invest it in ways that will have the most positive impact. What's even better is now my grandchildren are involved too! Family foundations don't require a ton of money, and when you do this, you not only teach your children economic literacy, but most importantly, the rewards that come with giving money away to make a positive difference in the world.

M.O.: *Any regrets?*

T.T.: I have a few regrets—who doesn't? But dwelling on them doesn't get you anywhere. If you've made mistakes in the past, the way to address them is by vowing to do better the next time. I firmly believe that if every one of us did more good things than bad things every day, the world would be a much better place.

A version of this story was first published in the Winter 2017 edition of Mountain Outlaw magazine.



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SECTION 4:

A LOOK INTO BIG SKY
IDEAS FESTIVAL
TEDxBigSky
 x = independently
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To wrap up his talk, Lamoreaux stretched out his arms, closed his eyes and said, "Keep flying." He continues to paraglide even after a paragliding crash in 2013 left him with extensive traumatic injuries and cost him a leg. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

TEDxBigSky speakers offer stories of resilience, hardship, inspiration



BY BELLA BUTLER AND GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – Following the rollercoaster that was 2020, the fifth annual TEDxBigSky took place in the new year on Jan. 30, 2021, capping off the weeklong Big Sky Ideas Festival which included panel conversations, live music and film screenings.

To plan a TEDx event during a normal year is a major lift; to plan one during a pandemic requires a team effort, hard work, flexibility and creativity. This year, the event was held in person, to a select group of approximately 50 attendees socially distanced, and virtually. Nine speakers presented their personal serendipitous, life-changing, awakening experiences from the stage of the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center which was broadcast to a live global audience.

The virtual event drew an audience of 1,700 on Jan. 30 and as of Feb. 2 the video has garnered close to 5,000 views.

The theme of the evening was "Awakening," inspired by the awakening process the country has gone through over the past year.

One viewer, Derek Leonard, shared his experience watching the live stream from the comfort of his couch and described the event as "the most impactful and inspirational TEDxBigSky."

"It was just so great to have my judgements once again proven shallow, as each speaker excelled at 'awakening' emotions that challenged me with a call to action in regards to perceptions," Leonard said. "It was a really unique and fulfilling way to spend a couple hours. The curation and preparation was phenomenal and evident. Hats off to all that made that happen."

The Outlaw Partners team that put the event together had their work cut out for them.

"The biggest challenge was the changing landscape of not knowing if we would be able to have a live event or not," said Ennion Williams, VP of events at Outlaw Partners. "Once we made the plan to go virtual, we realized that we could reach a much larger audience."

Echoing Williams, Ersin Ozer, media and events director at Outlaw

Partners, also acknowledged the obstacles the pandemic presented in planning the event.

"The challenges of this pandemic brought us an opportunity to take a big step and explore new ways to produce the event," Ozer said. "We've always wanted to livestream the event to the entire world with studio production value, and now we can grow that next year. A huge thank you to our sponsors, and to our Livestream Partner at GoPro for their impact in helping to make it happen."

In so many ways, the world and human existence are structured by duality. After the darkness of night comes the light of day; after sleep comes consciousness; and perhaps after death, rebirth. One can only hope that a year of pandemic-induced devastation could yield such a counterpart—an awakening.

Louise Johns, a documentary photographer, vividly recalled joining her father on a National Geographic assignment as a child in the Pryor Mountains of Montana. As she peered through the viewfinder of her father's camera, she felt in touch with something outside of herself for the first time.

Now a photojournalist herself, Johns has invested time capturing the relationship between bison and Plains Indians in Montana and Canada, as well as the relationship between a ranching family and grizzly bears in the Tom Miner Basin in Montana.

Johns expressed the importance of spending time with the stories she tells and building relationships with the people and places to which they belong.

"My camera has awakened me to the power of presence," she said.

Following Johns, another visual storyteller, Max Lowe, spoke of his grieving process following the death of his father Alex Lowe, who was killed in an avalanche in the Himalaya in 1999 when Lowe was 10 years old. Nearly two decades later, Lowe documented his family's 2016 trip to retrieve his father's body from Tibet.

In a somber and contemplative tone, Lowe described the dissonance between understanding the power of vulnerability as a storyteller and struggling to embrace it as a character in his own story. Following that painful trip to

Tibet, he learned to turn the camera back on himself, embracing empathy and vulnerability over ego.

Years after the tragedy of Alex Lowe's death, Lane Lamoreaux, a wildlands firefighter, U.S. Marine and now filmmaker, suffered his own accident while paragliding in 2013. Lamoreaux's heart flatlined, he lay in a hospital bed in a coma for nine weeks, and will live the rest of his life with a prosthetic leg. As a paraglider and former smoke jumper, much of Lamoreaux's life has been defined by a high-altitude perspective, and he implored the TEDx audience to consider flying as a metaphor for resilience.

Lamoreaux says the bond he shares with his twin brother saved his life, and he emphasized the importance of human connection, a force strong enough to combat turbulence and rough air. By way of discipline, determination and a constructive attitude, Lamoreaux continues to paraglide and has used a camera to carve out a new life for himself making training videos for the National Fire Center.

"Find lift, gain altitude and appreciate the view," Lamoreaux advised. In a deeply moving gesture, Lamoreaux closed his talk by shutting his eyes and stretching out his arms. "Keep flying," he said.

Joining Lamoreaux in describing how their disabilities inspired awakening, Rob Balucas and Blu took the stage with two inspiring stories. Balucas, who suffered emotionally following the 2008 recession, recalled telling himself something many living through the current pandemic are likely familiar with: "This wasn't supposed to be my life," he said.

"As we discovered even in this last year, the true and inalienable right we have is to change, to challenge," Balucas said. "And if you don't have a toolbox of tools to use to cope, you just set yourself up for a world of hurt."

Balucas, a triathlete, learned to take life as it comes, to opt for the less often discussed third option in the fight or flight psychology, and to surrender and move through reality. When he was paralyzed from the waist down in a bike crash, he didn't allow himself to be paralyzed in fear but rather galvanized by gratitude for what he still had. Balucas continues training for an Ironman Triathlon.

Blu, a mystic medicine woman, musician, artist and storyteller, began to lose her hearing due to a hereditary disorder in her 20s. After grieving this loss, she found healing in rooting out a new superpower within her challenge.

While words lie, Blu said, energy never does, and she's been able to communicate with people in what she finds to be a more meaningful way. "What story are you telling yourself around your own limitation?" she asked the audience. Then, in a chilling performance, Blu closed her speech by harmonizing with a Tibetan singing bowl.

Josh McCain, founder of Big Sky Bravery, also helps others to deal with personal limitations, largely mental and emotional. McCain is helping members of America's most elite Armed Forces to battle their inner demons. Inspired by his brother-in-law Jeremy Keller, McCain founded a nonprofit to help active-duty Special Operations Forces decompress and reconnect with civilians.

McCain stressed the importance of starting the healing process while people are still serving and offered some staggering statistics detailing the impact duty has on SOFs and their families. McCain also shared anecdotal results from the programs or "task forces" run by Big Sky Bravery over the years and said that participants' relationships with their families and civilians improved as a result of the program.

"One idea can spark massive change," McCain said.

In closing, McCain brought Keller out on the stage with him and offered the audience four questions to help inspire change: What needs our help? What makes sense? What drives you? And, what are the right reasons?

The right reasons could be as simple as wanting a better future for your granddaughter, according to the next speaker, Dr. Cathy Whitlock.

Whitlock, a Regents professor in Earth Science at Montana State University, is a leader in the field of climate change and has been studying Yellowstone National Park since the '80s when she fell in love with it.

She detailed her research of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and emphasized what a special place it is. "Yellowstone is an idea for me as much as it is a place," Whitlock said.

Climate change, she said, has affected the GYE and said that living with uncertainties will be part of our future as a human race. While the climate crisis will not fix itself, Whitlock said she has hope that the crisis can be solved if humans act now.

Offering her own food for thought, Whitlock asked, "Whose future are you worried about?" and answered her own question saying, "I'm worried about my granddaughter."

As one of 33 first cousins, David Leuschen, who also spoke on the climate crisis, recognizes the importance of family and building a better future for loved ones.

From Goldman Sachs to Riverstone Holdings, LLC, Leuschen has been in the energy business for 40 years. Leuschen cofounded Riverstone, which is one of the world's largest energy investment firms and the largest independent investor in renewable energy.

Leuschen's goal is simple: decarbonize or transition away from fossil fuels to low-carbon energy sources. The way the energy transition will happen, he says, is through private capital.

When COVID-19 hit, there was speculation about whether the pandemic would help or hurt energy transition. Leuschen says the coronavirus has helped. He presented various S-Curves, a measurement of the rate of change or rate of adoption of new

technologies, detailing the progress of decarbonization thus far.

His conclusion was firm: "The tuba is blaring; fossil fuels are over."

Jim Salestrom, Emmy Award-winning songwriter, lead singer of "Timberline" and a frequent member of Dolly Parton's band since 1979, rounded out the evening with his guitar.

Salestrom shared some of his favorite stories playing with Parton and memories of his 25-year friendship with John Denver. He also described his childhood growing up in Kearney, Nebraska, and the awakening he experienced as a child when he discovered music.

"I hope to try to awaken the next generation of young songwriters and singers," Salestrom said.

After sharing stories and memories, Salestrom described the various inspirations in his life, including his son, James Salestrom, who joined him onstage to play "Rocky Mountain High."

The evening contained a number of stories of personal hardship and suffering, but within the dark, there was also light: stories of perseverance, inspiration and awakening.

"Anyone can analyze their own life using the idea of story and their place in it," Lowe said in his talk. "It's when you look at your own life as a story that you almost give yourself a window to look down on yourself as a character in your own narrative ... and give yourself the chance, the space and the stage to speak your truth."

Visit tedxbigsky.com/live-stream to watch all nine talks.



Jim Salestrom plays his guitar onstage for TEDxBigSky. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

Big Sky Bravery's McCain talks helping active-duty special ops forces

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – Josh McCain is the founder and president of Big Sky Bravery, a nonprofit organization that helps active-duty servicemen and -women from Special Operations Forces, or SOF, decompress following deployments. He was inspired to start Big Sky Bravery in 2016, when his brother-in-law and personal hero Jeremy Keller returned from his 14th deployment.

On Jan. 27, EBS Editor-in-Chief Joseph T. O'Connor sat down with McCain and Keller to kick off the Big Sky Ideas Festival and talk about Big Sky Bravery.

McCain said that after growing up in Three Forks, Montana he and his wife moved to New York City to live the big-city dream. After hitting a slump, McCain came up with the idea for Big Sky Bravery, inspired by Keller, and he and his wife picked up their lives and moved to Bozeman to start Big Sky Bravery.

Seeing a gap in service for active-duty members of the armed forces and a plethora of nonprofits dedicated to veterans, McCain got to work. While he acknowledges that helping veterans is critical, he also said that helping men and women while they are in active-duty status can prevent mental illness and suicide once they retire as veterans. "I think it's time to be proactive," McCain said. "We need doers more than thinkers."

Keller served in the American Armed Forces and is a decorated U.S. Army Ranger with a total of 18 deployments outside of training under his belt. When McCain called him to propose the idea for the nonprofit, Keller said it would make a huge difference.

"Big Sky Bravery is changing lives and changing marriages," Keller said. "I'm honored to be the impetus behind it, but it's bigger than one person."

Big Sky Bravery partners with among the most elite units in the U.S. Armed Forces and runs weeklong programs, or Task Forces, to help servicemembers decompress and heal. McCain explained that the organization designs its programs around the idea of "freedom of thought," which has task force members completing activities that require total focus and execution.



Josh McCain started Big Sky Bravery in honor of his brother-in-law, Jeremy Keller, an Army Ranger who has served through 18 total deployments. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

McCain pointed to numerous testimonials from task force participants who benefited immensely and whose lives have been changed as a result of Big Sky Bravery's programming.

"We're giving people a new sense of hope, peace and restoration for their future," he said.

Visit youtube.com/watch?v=3NgLLqx-eno to view the full interview.



On Friday, Jan. 29, Jim Salestrom played live at ACRE in the Town Center of Big Sky. Halfway through the evening, he addresses two young boys, who are wiggling with giddiness, in the audience. He thanks them for listening to his music, and tells them, "I've been playing this song since I was seven." He then plays "Puff the Magic Dragon" causing almost every person in the room to sway along to the nostalgic tune. After the show, when asked what it's like to play with his son, James, Salestrom said, "It's not perfect but it's fun. There's a lot of love." PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

Big Sky Ideas Fest panel discusses climate change

BY MIRA BRODY

BIG SKY – Two male polar bears feed on the carcass of a baby polar bear until its mother arrives, carrying the remains to safety to grieve in a scene from Max Lowe’s documentary “Bare Existence.”

In the film, Steven Amstrup, chief scientist for Polar Bears International, says this occurrence of cannibalism, among other mannerisms of desperation, will only increase as the bear’s ecosystem shrinks due to climate change.

“We can think of these bears as messengers,” says Amstrup in the film. “It’s a tragic message but these kinds of events unfolding in the arctic tell us what kinds of events are to come to all of us.” The screening kicked off a roundtable discussion called “The Arctic Circle to Yellowstone; A Conversation on Climate,” moderated by journalist Todd Wilkinson on Jan. 27 at the Big Sky Ideas Festival. The discussion took place in the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center and was broadcast on Explore Big Sky’s YouTube channel.

Panelists included Lowe, who has worked with National Geographic since he received the Young Explorers Grant in 2012; Dr. Cathy Whitlock, a Regents professor in earth sciences at Montana State University and a Fellow of the Montana Institute on Ecosystems; Twila Moon, deputy lead scientist of the National Snow and Ice Data Center’s Cooperative Institute for Research at University of Colorado and co-founder of the Wheelhouse Institute; and Kristin Gardner, executive director for the Gallatin River Task Force.



As part of panel discussion on climate change, Max Lowe’s film “Bare Existence” was virtually screened. PHOTO COURTESY OF MAX LOWE

Wilkinson, a seasoned environmental journalist and founder of the digital publication Mountain Journal, led the discussion about the importance of taking action for vulnerable species like the polar bear, but also for humans. Amid statistics Moon calls “unimaginable” and tragic footage of a species with limited time on our planet, however, the panel spoke of hope in the coming years.

“I do think we have to spend some time recognizing sadness, recognizing grief, recognizing the really unpleasant and difficult feelings that come with seeing these changes in our life, but we then have to take ourselves back out of that,” said Moon. She does this, she says, by educating herself and others and believing that everyone has the power to make a difference.

Change seems to live at the intersection of passion and education, a truth that became evident when Whitlock spoke of her work in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

“It’s the biggest high there is—that’s what got me started,” said Whitlock, who served as lead author of the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment and in 2018 she became the first person from a Montana university to be elected to the National Academy of Sciences. “I just love what I’m doing and it’s so darn fun.” Both Gardner and Lowe touched on another great influencer of change: relating it to something you love.

“If you can personalize stories, I think that goes a really long way,” Gardner said. Because our values in Big Sky revolve around the outdoors, such as skiing fresh powder and fishing clean waterways, personalizing climate change is a powerful focus of GRTF. She says a good version of what the polar bear is to arctic communities is our local algae bloom—an indicator of water quality in the Gallatin.

Climate change science is more accurate than ever, there are more activists than ever, and there are open-minded, younger generations to educate—armed with these facts, we may just come out on the other side, panelists agreed.

“If we act within the next 10 to 12 years, we can save the world we know,” Lowe said. “We’re not just observers of ecology, we’re in it—every time you step outside your house you have some ability to influence the world.”

Visit youtube.com/watch?v=GmRSu8kQxxs&feature=youtu.be to watch the climate discussion.



Max Lowe is a photographer and documentary filmmaker who recently completed “Torn” the story of his father’s death and his family’s journey to retrieve his body. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

Lessons learned from my disability during COVID-19

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – To close out the Big Sky Ideas Festival, Outlaw Partners' VP of Events Ennion Williams moderated a panel discussion with TEDx speaker Rob Balucas and Lane Lamoreaux as well as documentary filmmaker Seth Dahl on living with a disability through a pandemic.

While the term “new normal” is a recent addition to the general population’s vocabulary, Balucas, who was paralyzed from the waist down in a cycling accident, has been familiar with adjusting to a sudden disruption to regular life.

“You learn through the rehab process that you’re going to do something that’s uncomfortable and not fun,” said Balucas, who spent six hours in surgery following the Sept. 5, 2015 crash in Marin County, California on an infamous stretch of Lucas Valley Road. “And it’s gonna seem like the impossible the first few times.” But through the support of medical professionals, friends and family, he said, all of a sudden the impossible becomes normal.

Lamoreaux, who had already experienced a life-altering challenge after suffering severe physical trauma and the loss of his leg from a paragliding accident, had plans for surgery and medical treatment derailed when the early days of the pandemic favored only some urgent procedures.

After undergoing a rescheduled surgery to relieve pain, the former U.S. Marine, wildland firefighter and smoke jumper experienced complications with virtual aftercare appointments, which led to further complications.

Now a filmmaker, Lamoreaux also gave a nod to the professional opportunities that COVID-19 has opened up for him. No longer able to continue physically fighting fires, he’s found a niche creating training videos for fire agencies and other national departments.

Dahl has been documenting Lamoreaux’s recovery and journey back to flying in his feature documentary “Flying Air,” slated for release later this year. While funding for the film took a hit during the pandemic, Dahl said time makes things sweeter, and Lamoreaux’s is a powerful story that needs to be told.

Watch at: [youtube.com/watch?v=xnhIWlf6yHQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnhIWlf6yHQ)



Lamoreaux is now the subject of a feature documentary “Flying Air” created by Seth Dahl. The film details his recovery and his journey back to flying. PHOTO COURTESY OF SETH DAHL



Rob Balucas and Lane Lamoreaux both experienced life-changing accidents that left them with permanent physical disabilities. On the evening of Thursday, Jan. 28, both men discussed their experiences with their injuries during a global pandemic. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER



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BY KEN TAKATA

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