

Big Sky

June 18 - July 1, 2021
Volume 12 // Issue #13

**Low flows threaten health
of the Gallatin**

*YC snowmaking project
gets green light*

**Organizations unite for Gallatin
Home Rivers Initiative**

**Music in the Mountains celebrates
triumphant return**

*MSU's Malt Lab perfects
the art of brewing*



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ON THE COVER:

Rafters float the Gallatin River as Storm Castle Peak watches over. After experiencing a peak in runoff, the river is mellowing out for the summer months. PHOTO BY AUSTIN FEIST

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Low flows threaten health of the Gallatin

High temperatures and drought conditions in early June pose a potential threat to the Gallatin River ecosystem. Shallow, warm water may negatively impact the river's trout population, but conservation efforts offer hope.

17

YC snowmaking project gets green light

On June 8, the Yellowstone Club announced that it obtained the first permit in Montana to recycle treated wastewater for snowmaking. The project will result in a net benefit of 25-million-plus gallons of water to the local watershed and will treat wastewater to an even higher standard than the water currently used to irrigate four golf courses in Big Sky.

19

Organizations unite for Gallatin Home Rivers Initiative

Simms Fishing Products and Trout Unlimited recently announced a three-year partnership focused on initiatives to protect and conserve the Gallatin River. Efforts will be spearheaded by Connor Parrish with a funding commitment to the tune of \$250,000 from Simms.

38

Music in the Mountains celebrates triumphant return

The Arts Council of Big Sky announced their star-studded Music in the Mountains summer lineup at a release party on June 10. Following a quiet pandemic year, Big Sky's beloved free concert series will return with pent-up celebration on July 3.

40

MSU's Malt Lab perfects the art of brewing

Good barley makes good malt, and good malt ultimately brews good beer. All this chemistry and agriculture starts at Montana State University's Barley, Malt & Brewing Quality Lab, which provides imperial data for growers and brewers across the continent.



Opening Shot

Big Sky Resort opened for their summer season on June 12, welcoming zipliners, mountain bikers and recreationists of all ages for a summer of outdoor fun around Lone Mountain. PHOTO BY PATRICK CONROY VIA BIG SKY RESORT

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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



What is your favorite part about the Big Sky Farmers Market?



Mike O'Dowd | *Mobile, Alabama*
"I enjoy little open markets just because I like watching people—drinking a beer and watching people is even twice as good."



Joseph Clark | *Big Sky, Montana*
"Definitely fresh fruit and wild flowers."



Colleen DeGaetano | *Long Island, New York*
"The market lends to the atmosphere of getting people out and about and coming to see this nice center, and of course seeing a lot of local crafts and exposure to people's businesses."



Will Livernois | *Bozeman, Montana*
"Walking around and seeing all the people having fun and hanging with their dogs and families."

Save the Date!

AUG. 15TH IN BIG SKY, MT

HOOKED ON THE GALLATIN 2021

ONLINE AND IN PERSON @ THE RIVERHOUSE

COCKTAIL PARTY AND AUCTION WITH "ROLLIN" ON THE RIVER

CONCERT WITH LANEY LOU AND THE BIRD DOGS

AUCTION BEGINS ONLINE AUGUST 7TH



501c3 | TAX ID: 74-3127146

Partnering with our greater community to lead conservation and inspire stewardship of the Gallatin River Watershed.



GALLATIN RIVER

TASK FORCE



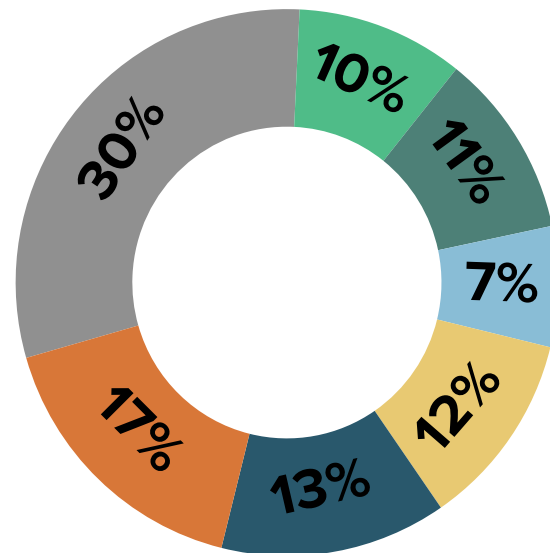
BETTER TOGETHER

A biweekly District bulletin

Thank you Big Sky, for your feedback on Project Applications. Over the course of 2 meetings on June 7th & 10th, the District's locally elected Board used your feedback to help guide them in making strategic community investments. Review the community projects which received FY22 funding below and at ResortTax.org/funding.

TOTAL FUNDING: \$7,057,754*
47 Projects from 26 Sponsors

**Does not include FY22 1% for Infrastructure commitment: \$2,716,875*



GOVERNMENT ENTITIES INTERLOCAL OPERATIONS

- Big Sky Fire Department \$883,496
- Big Sky Transportation District \$850,000
- Gallatin County Sheriff's Office \$323,378
- Gallatin Canyon Water & Sewer District \$74,000

HOUSING

- RiverView Apartments**
Big Sky Community Housing Trust \$500,000
- Operations**
Big Sky Community Housing Trust \$140,000
- Rent Local Incentive**
Big Sky Community Housing Trust \$65,000

RECREATION & CONSERVATION

- Operations & Maintenance**
Big Sky Community Organization \$675,243
- Operations**
Gallatin River Task Force \$76,201
- Gallatin River Access Restoration**
Gallatin River Task Force \$46,377
- Big Sky Water Conservation Program**
Gallatin River Task Force \$41,077
- Board Replacement**
Big Sky Skating & Hockey Association \$39,750
- Watershed Monitoring & Analysis**
Gallatin River Task Force \$38,008
- Operating Funds Assistance**
Big Sky Skating & Hockey Association \$34,980
- Middle Fork Restoration**
Gallatin River Task Force \$34,765
- Education & Outreach**
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance \$32,900
- Buck Ridge/Doe Creek 2 Weekly Groomings**
Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association \$27,000
- BSTRP-FY22**
Big Sky Trails & Parks District \$25,000
- Parks & Trails Maintenance Equipment**
Big Sky Community Organization \$22,400
- Environmental Stewardship**
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance \$21,600
- Administration**
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance \$18,648

- Big Sky Land Conservation**
Montana Land Reliance \$20,000
- Tennis Court Resurfacing**
Big Sky Community Organization \$13,200
- Recycling/Compost Service**
Big Sky SNO, Inc \$5,400
- Equipment Storage Trailer**
Big Sky Skating & Hockey Association \$2,300
- Glycol Tank**
Big Sky Skating & Hockey Association \$1,750

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

- BSFD Capital Request**
Big Sky Fire Department \$450,000
- Training & Equipment**
Big Sky Search and Rescue \$53,500

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Maintenance Facility**
Big Sky Community Organization \$267,339
- Water Supply Resiliency**
Gallatin River Task Force \$240,567
- Post Office Operations**
Post Office LLC \$131,000
- Upper Gallatin Nutrient Reduction**
Gallatin River Task Force \$86,567
- US-191 Wildlife & Transportation Conflict Assessment**
Center for Large Landscape Conservation \$50,000
- Equipment**
Big Sky Ski Education Foundations \$42,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Destination Marketing**
Visit Big Sky \$225,000
- Staffing & Operations**
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce \$321,507
- Staffing & Operations**
Visit Big Sky \$199,279
- Education - Market Research**
Visit Big Sky \$25,997

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Music in the Mountains 2022**
Arts Council of Big Sky \$215,000
- Cultural Programming for 2021 & 2022**
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center \$210,000
- Tuition Assistance Program**
Morningstar Learning Center \$200,000
- Montessori Early Childhood Program**
Big Sky Discovery Academy & Community Learning Center \$45,200
- Big Sky Community Library**
Friends of the Big Sky Community Library \$87,825
- Operating Budget**
Morningstar Learning Center \$75,000
- Behavioral Health**
Women In Action \$51,500
- Emergency Food & Social Services**
Big Sky Community Food Bank \$48,000
- Event Coordinator**
Big Sky Ski Education Foundation \$20,000

Administered by the Big Sky Resort Area District, Resort Tax is a 4% tax on luxury goods & services.

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

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The ELM, Bozeman's newest music venue, releases initial lineup

LOGJAM PRESENTS

BOZEMAN – Montana-based entertainment company Logjam Presents has announced the Grand Opening and initial lineup for Bozeman, Montana's newest concert venue, The ELM.

Located on the corner of South 7th Avenue and Short Street in Bozeman's emerging Midtown District, the brand new 1,100-cap venue will open its doors on September 3, 2021 to welcome eight-time Grammy nominee Death Cab for Cutie. The Grand Opening will be followed by performances from electronic future-bass duo Louis The Child (Sep. 7), Perfume Genius (Sep. 11) and Future Islands (Sep. 14).

Other concerts announced include popular soul/R&B ensemble Lake Street Dive (Sep. 21), Bozeman natives Pinky & the Floyd (Sep. 25), a seated performance with singer-songwriter Todd Snider (Oct. 1), Lucy Dacus (Oct. 4), and an evening of American Southern soul-rock with JJ Grey & Mofro (Nov. 14) among several others.

"The ELM is exactly what Bozeman needs," says Ryan Torres, VP of Marketing for Logjam Presents. "Nationally touring artists have long needed a dedicated venue in Bozeman. With the new ELM, Bozemanites now have an opportunity to experience world-class entertainment in a state-of-the-art venue right in their own backyard. This will bring an entirely new caliber of entertainment to the area."

Tickets for the grand opening and initial lineup of events will go on sale this Friday, June 18 and will be available online only at logjampresents.com starting at 10 a.m. For those interested in getting tickets ahead of the crowd, Logjam Presents will be hosting a venue presale online only from 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. Thursday, June 17, 2021. Patrons can sign up for the presale password through the event pages at logjampresents.com/events/.

MT Highway 64 TIGER Grant project delay, seeks public input

SANDERSON STEWART

BIG SKY – In 2017, the community of Big Sky was awarded a TIGER grant from the Federal Highway Administration in the amount of \$10.2 million dollars for major infrastructure improvements along the Lone Mountain Trail/MT Highway 64 corridor.

Once the agreement was signed in June 2019 between Gallatin County and FHWA, Sanderson Stewart was awarded the contract to oversee design and construction for the improvements in September 2019. In partnership with Stahly Engineering, the team has worked diligently with Gallatin County, the Montana Department of Transportation and FHWA to work through the design, acquisition of land (right-of-way) for the expanded roadway, and the required permitting for the project.

The right-of-way acquisition process took longer than anticipated but was completed the first week in May and the team then proceeded directly into bidding the project. Bids were opened on Tuesday, May 25. Only one bid was received, and it was significantly higher than our estimated construction cost and the budget available for the project.

At this time, Gallatin County and FHWA have agreed to re-bid the project this fall and begin construction in the spring of 2022. If bids still come in over budget, some components of the project may need to be eliminated. Therefore, we would like your input on which components of the project are the highest priority for the community. A survey is available until July 15, 2021.

Gallatin City-County Health Department changing of officers

EBS STAFF

BOZEMAN – On Monday, June 7, the Gallatin City-County Health Department gained a new health officer. Both the Gallatin County and Bozeman City commission moved to appoint Lori Christenson to take the place of Matt Kelley, who announced he would be stepping down to take a new job in March after 11 years.

Christenson is the director of environmental health services at the health department and was recommended by the board of health at the end of May after a lengthy hiring process. From 13 applicants, she was one of three finalists for the job.

"I appreciate all those kind words and the feedback, I know that this position will be challenging there's no doubt about it," said Christenson upon receiving her recommendation from the board in May. "I look forward to working with our staff and community and partners."

At his final press conference on May 28, Kelley, who navigated the county through the COVID-19 pandemic, said that vaccination efforts would be winding down and that virus case numbers were "what we really wanted to see."

"Lori has been an incredible partner to me," Kelley said. He will move on to be the first chief executive officer of the Montana Public Health Institute.

Planning your trip to Yellowstone

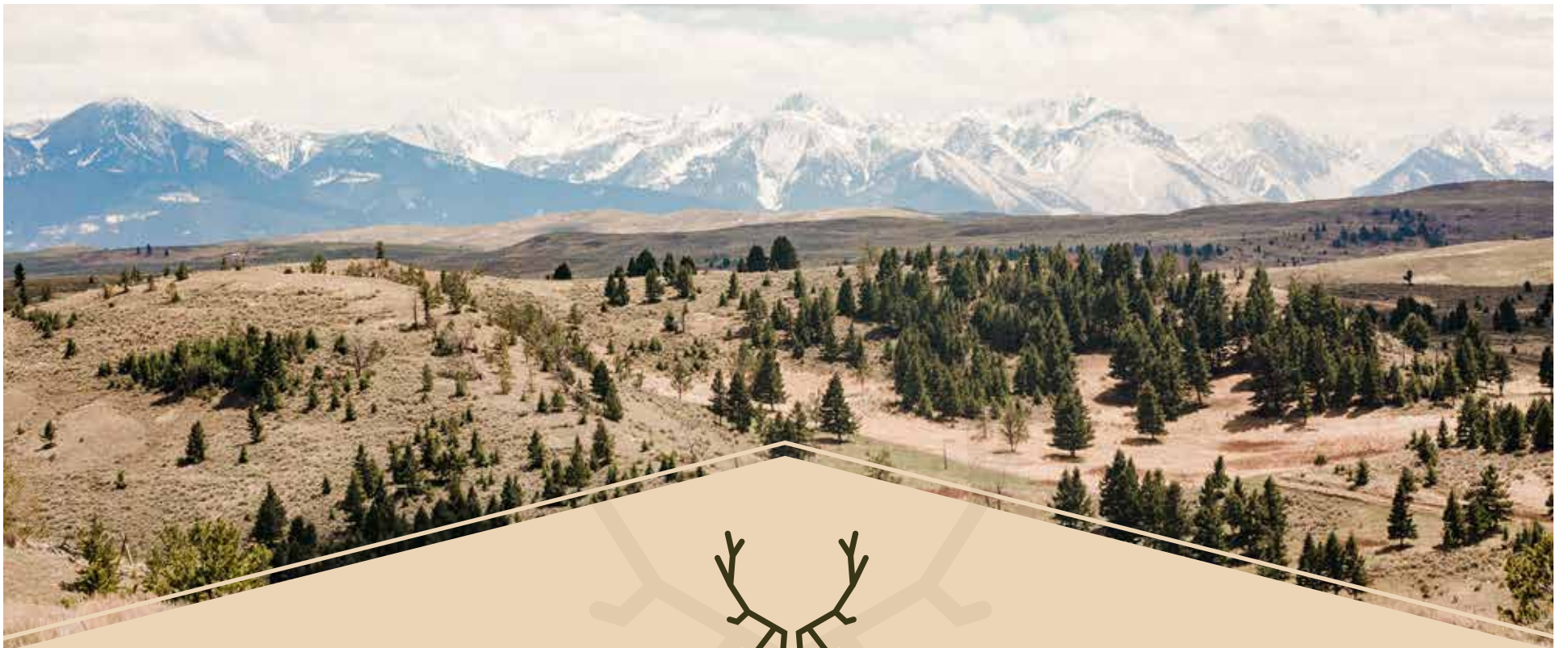
EBS STAFF

Whether you're camping, fishing, hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing or boating in the nation's first national park this summer, Yellowstone is a place to experience the wonders of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. This summer, the National Park Service is expecting one of their busiest years on record, and are asking visitors to prepare ahead to protect themselves and the park.

"Be patient with each other and with us," read one tip from the National Park Service's "Plan Like a Park Ranger" campaign. The campaign is intended to prepare people and employees for what NPS expects to be one of the busiest summers on record. Many popular parks, like Glacier, are requiring reservations for entry and other smaller parks still have limited services. Yellowstone in particular is educating people about traffic jams, the resident wild animals and how to deal with both.

A few tips from the park service:

- Expect long lines and traffic delays. Leave early or come late if you want to avoid crowds.
- You can also buy your entry pass ahead of time at recreation.gov.
- Reserve a campground or hotel ahead of time, as camping is only allowed in designated areas.
- Be aware of park conditions, weather, road construction, temporary road closures and the backcountry situation report.
- Expect limited access to cellular phone service and internet access.
- Download Yellowstone's app before you arrive.
- Stay at least 100 yards from bears or wolves, and at least 25 yards from all other wildlife.
- Stay on boardwalks and trails in thermal areas.
- Be bear aware. Carry bear spray. Know how to use it. Be alert. Make noise. Hike in groups.
- Leave no trace; whatever you bring in on your day out, pack it back out until you find the appropriate receptacle.
- Don't take antlers, artifacts, rocks, plants or other objects from the park.
- Reduce the spread of COVID-19. If you are sick, stay home.
- Report poor or dangerous behavior to law enforcement or park staff.



THE RESERVE AT
WILLOW CREEK

Located against the foothills of the Bangtail Mountain range in Southwest Montana, The Reserve at Willow Creek offers you the best of what makes Montana great. These one-of-a-kind, 157 +/- acre parcels provide world-class views, end of the road privacy and wide-open spaces, only 25 minutes from Livingston, Montana.

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Resort tax board allocates \$7M to community organizations

Contested applicants defend projects in final review

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – Approximately 60 people gathered virtually on Zoom on the evening of June 10 to hear final discussion and decision on resort tax funding allocation from the Big Sky Resort Area District board. Forty-four of the 48 projects received full funding out of the roughly \$7 million total allocation, but a few high-dollar requests were met with board and public resistance.

Leading up to the June 7 and 10 application review meetings, many individuals submitted public comments critical of marketing and management organization Visit Big Sky's requests, one of which was a \$556,215 ask for destination marketing. Board directors said they received similar input when soliciting feedback from community members on this year's applications.

"I understand that the [Big Sky Chamber of Commerce] and Visit Big Sky have a very important role to play and the destination marketing does impact our ability to offset the effect of development," said 21-year Big Sky resident Dick Fast, who shared his comment during the June 7 meeting. "But I think right now we're in a very difficult transition period with very increased visitation and a lot of development and infrastructure that's not keeping up with it." Virtual attendees wrote into the meeting with resounding agreement to Fast.

New Chamber and VBS CEO Brad Niva, who was just days into his new role at the time of the review meetings, returned on June 10 after the board had made a preliminary decision to cut the destination marketing project by more than half. He shared with the board that since the first meeting, VBS had canceled a marketing contract and was focusing on "revenue positive" projects.

Niva said that he intends to change the vernacular surrounding Visit Big Sky as a Destination Marketing Organization. In following national trends, Niva said VBS will transition to a Destination Management Organization with a focus on managing tourism.

"This is a fundamental shift of how our office has been managed and we'll be concentrating on stewardship of our community and working hard delivering a first-class destination experience for visitors while respecting the needs of our residents," he said.

Niva added that timed with his arrival, the more-than 50 percent cut to VBS' allocation is "manageable," but he hopes it won't set a precedent for resort tax funding for tourism promotion. In total, VBS was allocated \$450,276 and the Chamber was allocated \$321,507.

The Big Sky Community Housing Trust applied for funding for four projects, including \$1.1 million for the acquisition of land to be earmarked for a future workforce housing project. The Trust did not identify details, such as what land they hoped to purchase, and the board chose not to fund the project at this time due to lack of specificity.

Kim Beatty, counsel to BSRAD, provided legal insight on funding the Housing Trust's vague request. "It's my opinion that you can't write them a blank check, you can't take public funds and just allocate it to them with no discussion or detail about what that project is and what the parameters are," she said.

Housing Trust Executive Director Laura Seyfang and Housing Trust Board Chair Tim Kent spoke at the June 10 meeting in opposition of the board's decision. They discussed the importance of funding the community's "No. 1 issue" and the message the board was sending by choosing not to fund the land acquisition.

"I think to kind of take a pass on it at this point in time and just set this aside without being specific towards us is not advancing our solution to the cause at all," Kent said, referring to board's choice to place extra funds in their reserve rather than fund the future development project.

"...By not committing funds to making the next land purchase, I think is a really big mistake for our community," Seyfang said.

Board members assured the applicants that housing was a top priority for them. "I personally am a huge, huge supporter of housing," said Board Chair Kevin Germain. "It is our No. 1 community issue. I just right now would like to put that money in reserve, form a subcommittee to iron out the details of the Housing Trust and see how we can continue to help..."

The board elected to provide \$500,000 to the Housing Trust's RiverView Apartments, a workforce housing project that has already received \$1.4 million in resort tax funding. The Trust's operations were fully funded at \$140,000, but the board cut their \$130,000 request for a new program incentivizing homeowners to rent to locals in half to "see if it works," according to Board Vice Chair Sarah Blechta.

Nearly 92 percent of the other 48 projects were fully funded, including several conservation and recreation projects, social services, infrastructure projects and three-year operations for entities including the Big Sky Fire Department, Gallatin County Sheriff's Office, Big Sky Transportation District and the Gallatin Canyon Water and Sewer District, all of which can legally enter into an interlocal agreement with BSRAD. The board had \$503,438 available at the end of of allocations to place in their reserve fund, which currently sits just under \$1.5 million.

The Resort Area District also piloted a scoring system this allocation cycle, which judged all projects on criteria related to collaboration, efficiency and planning. Though decisions weren't based solely on the scores this year, board members said it was helpful in providing objective insight.

"I think it's been a very significant step with benefit to our organization and the community," said Board Treasurer Steve Johnson.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 RESORT TAX ALLOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

\$7M

ALLOCATED

\$500K

PUT IN RESERVES

92%

OF PROJECTS FULLY FUNDED

HERE'S HOW THE \$7M BREAKS DOWN:
30% GOV. OPERATIONS • 17% RECREATION & CONSERVATION
13% COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL SERVICES
12% INFRASTRUCTURE • 11% ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
10% HOUSING • 7% PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

For the full award breakdown visit:
resorttax.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/FY22-Award-Cycle-Final.pdf

Montana's fire season off to early start

EBS STAFF

SOUTHWEST MONTANA – Most of the Mountain West is held in the grip of widespread drought conditions, and although it is only early June, fire season has already begun.

Unseasonal elevated temperatures, low humidity, a dwindling snowpack and high winds have all contributed to the early fire season, according to Big Sky Fire Department Chief Greg Megaard.

“I’m born and raised here, and I’ve never seen temperatures in the high 90s and hundreds in early to mid-June,” he said.

Due to the high fire danger, Megaard said the department has closed permitted debris burning until the conditions improve, and he urges residents to ensure all campfires are out.

As of EBS press time, three fires were currently burning in Montana: the Deep Creek Canyon Fire, Robertson Draw Fire and Crooked Creek Fire.

In recent days, the plume of smoke that has been visible north of Bozeman can be attributed to the Deep Creek Canyon Fire.

Last week, the Willow Creek Fire just north of Three Forks was initially reported on June 8, but is now contained. Megaard said the BSFD sent a few people there last weekend to help and that there is currently one Big Sky firefighter in Red Lodge helping with efforts related to the Robertson Draw Fire, which has grown to 21,000 acres as of EBS press time.

Megaard emphasized that, “our number one goal is to protect the resident community here in Big Sky.”

He said that the fire department just finished a tabletop exercise with the sheriff’s office along with other Big Sky organizations to talk about the evacuation plan in the event of an emergency. Megaard explained that the response will depend on the location of the fire, but residents can visit the fire department’s website for more information on how to be prepared.

Megaard urges the Big Sky community to be aware of the extreme conditions and careful of their actions.

“Everybody be cognizant of really paying attention to what they’re doing and the potential impact that may have, not only on themselves, but [also] their neighbors, and to be very cautious because you know, it’s green, it’s very dry and things will burn,” he said.



The Deep Creek Canyon Fire ignited on June 13 and is burning in the Deep Creek Canyon area near Townsend. The large plume of smoke visible north of Bozeman originates from this fire. LEFT TO RIGHT PHOTOS BY ERIC LADD AND MIRA BRODY



The Robertson Draw Fire ignited on June 13 south of Red Lodge, Montana near Clark, Wyoming. As of EBS press time on June 16, this fire was burning at 21,000 acres, up from 2,000 acres when it began on June 13. TOP ROW PHOTOS BY CASSANDRA MARFIA BOTTOM ROW LEFT TO RIGHT PHOTOS BY JOE O’CONNOR AND DAVE PECUNIES



ASPEN GROVES NEIGHBORHOOD

584 Autumn Trail
MLS # 359408 | 5 BED + 4.5 BATH | 5,397 +/- SQ. FT. | \$2,400,000

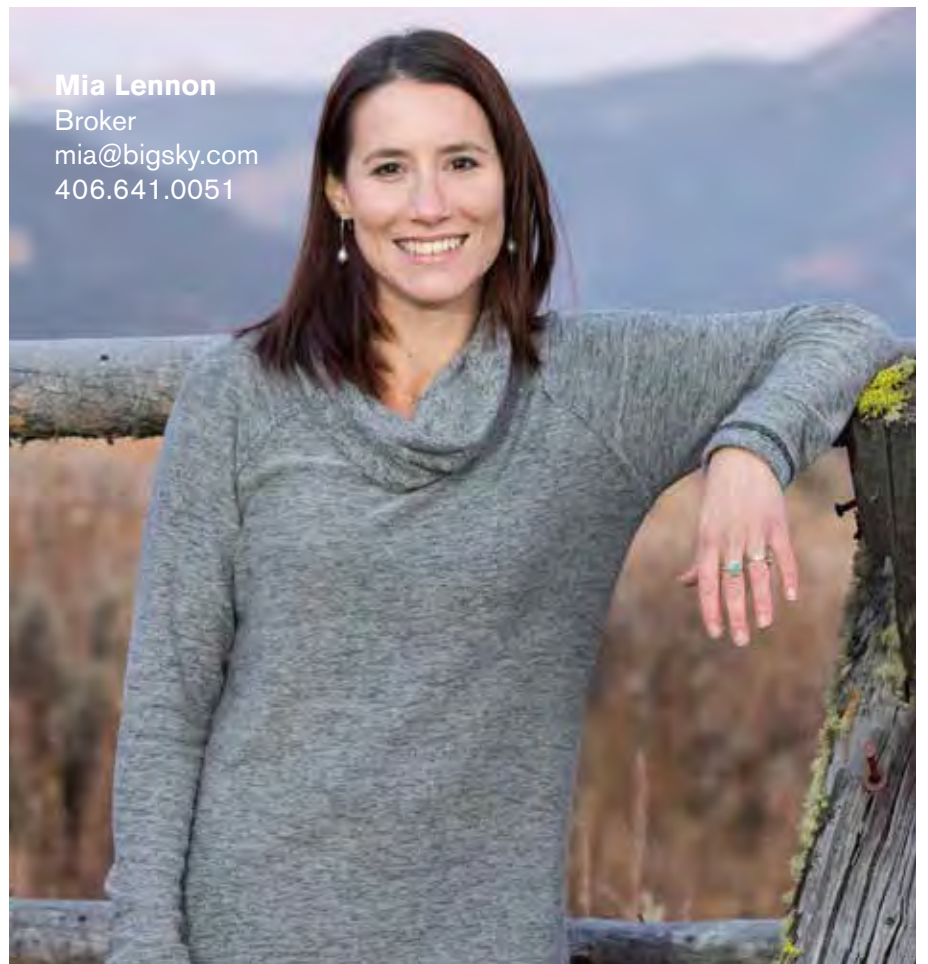


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BIG SKY FARMERS MARKET

Ozment Art

BY MIRA BRODY

Brett Ozment of Ozment Art, is a multimedia artist in Big Sky. Ozment Art provides a multi-platformed art experience by collaborating with two other local artists, photographer Jonathan Stone and musician Brad Thorton.

At his booth at the Big Sky Farmers Market, you will be graced with unique pieces of jewelry made from a mix of nature-inspired materials, such as feathers copper, wood and even guitar strings. Ozment Art also features succulent planters made from whiskey barrels, centerpieces and totems from animal bones, wooden bow ties and framed sketches as well as t-shirts, hoodies and belt buckles.



“Most of my free time is spent around hunting and fishing and foraging for morel mushrooms and antler sheds and I find myself in a lot of situations where nature and I are in close contact in beautiful settings in Montana that are almost always photograph worthy,” said Ozment.

Starting in July, Ozment plans to host an “market within a market,” in which visitors to his Farmers Market booth can come into a faux living room, listen to music, and experience the full range of artistic talent of Ozment Art in an immersive way.

Kokoro Flowers

BY BELLA BUTLER

Amidst the tables of produce and artisan crafts, a vibrant pop of color draws Big Sky Farmers Market strollers into the Kokoro Flowers booth. Meara Cassidy and Travis Cox, co-owners of the 6-year-old flower farm, greet patrons with sunny smiles as they prepare unique arrangements that will later adorn dining room tables.



Though Cassidy has been a farmer for 10 years, she didn't become involved with flowers until a farm she was working on encouraged her to use some of their space to develop her own business. To add diversity to the vegetable farm, she opted for growing flowers.

Cassidy said that while flowers can be considered a luxury item, she's learned how much flowers can really fit into people's lives.

“The value and brightness and happiness it brings—I guess I never expected it to be so significant,” she said.

Cassidy is half Japanese and said she sees Kokoro, named for the Japanese word meaning to have heart, as a marriage between the day-to-day use of flowers customary in Japan with the way wildflowers are engrained in the culture of the Mountain West.

In addition to their Community Supported Agriculture boxes, Cassidy and Cox sell their flowers at local farmers markets. Stop by the Kokoro booth at the Big Sky Farmers Market to arrange your own bouquet of early-season blooms like Lupine and Buttercups.



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‘Adopt a Month’ at the Big Sky Recycling Center

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – The Big Sky Recycling Center announced in June a new “Adopt a Month” initiative to help keep the center clean.

Following a spring-cleaning effort on May 14, Kali Quick, director of the recycling center, said she talked with a few volunteers, which sparked the idea to emulate the national Adopt-a-Highway program and ask local businesses and individuals to pitch in and help keep the center clean.

The center is looking for volunteers to share the responsibility of clearing trash and other debris that inevitably collects there.

“The expectation is that they will clean and pick up around the first of their month and around the fifteenth of their month,” Quick said. “It would be two site visits to the recycling center per month.”

She added that it would likely be about an hour of work for each site visit.

According to Quick, four organizations have already adopted a month at the center. Right now, the American Legion, the Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization, Republic Services and Haas Builders have all committed to keeping the center clean.

“It’s not an overwhelming commitment,” Quick said. “It’s something to be proud of and get your name recognized and on our list and keep everything moving forward positively for the recycling center.”

Peter Harned, owner of Full Circle Recycling, part of We Recycle Montana, said that the cleanliness of the site is important. When he spoke with EBS on June 9, he said he had a mat, dog life vest and cooler in his truck that he had collected after visiting the Big Sky site.

“There was a recycling site in the Meadow [Village], which was not taken care of very well and residents didn’t want it,” Harned said. “So, in order to keep these sites, we have to keep them clean. The fact that John Haas donated this extremely valuable piece of land for recycling is amazing.”

He also cautioned against “wishful recycling” saying that if residents are unsure if an item can be recycled, just leaving it loose at the site is not a good solution.

In addition to the Adopt a Month initiative, Quick said the recycling center has been working with Big Sky SNO, an organization dedicated to encouraging sustainable practices, to bring awareness to the center and get the Big Sky community more involved. As Big Sky grows, Quick cited Big Sky SNO as a valuable ally that can help with funding and community outreach.

“As we grow, there might be some additional grants and funding that can help aid in improving [the center] or increasing that space as Big Sky continues to produce more items that need to be recycled,” Quick said.



The Recycling Center recently erected a new sign which thanks all of the organizations that have partnered with or supported the center. PHOTO BY KALI QUICK

She noted that the center collected almost 100,000 additional pounds of recycling from 2019 to 2020 and the growth is anticipated to continue. Currently there are three pickup days a week at the center on Monday, Thursday and Saturday throughout the summer and Quick said on most of those days the bins are already overflowing.

“We’re working with We Recycle and Republic Services, and Gallatin County taxpayers are paying for this service, we want to do everything that we can to be able to continue to bring awareness to it so that we can anticipate growth and funding and different needs to make sure that Big Sky doesn’t lose this service or it doesn’t get out of control and we’re able to keep stepping up year after year,” Quick said.

Looking to the future, both Quick and Harned expressed the hope that recycling in Big Sky can expand, ideally to a bigger space. Harned said that a second residential recycling site would be very helpful.

Quick added that along with the Adopt a Month initiative, the center is looking to beautify the space by planting trees and grasses to make it a welcoming space for the Big Sky community.



On May 14, the Big Sky Recycling Center hosted a spring clean. American Legion, Haas Builders, Beehive Basin Brewery and We Recycle all pitched in to help make the center look shiny and new. PHOTO BY KALI QUICK

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Low water on the Gallatin threatens river health

BY JULIA BARTON

BIG SKY – Peering down the Gallatin Canyon, toes dangling off the edge of the Green Bridge, the early summer weather feels great on the skin. The unusually hot temperatures over the past few weeks do not, however, treat the Gallatin River as kindly. As we look forward to having fun on the water in the coming months, there are rising concerns for the health of the ecosystem of the Canyon's main artery.

Up to 80 percent of the Gallatin's water comes from snow melting off the high-alpine peaks in our area, according to the Gallatin River Task Force. The snowpack fueling the river is dependent both on how much snow is received during the winter and how much is retained by the landscape after snowfall ceases.

So far in June, the average maximum temperature in Bozeman is 81 degrees, 9 degrees above the month's 29-year average recorded by the National Weather Service.

The abnormally high temperatures are pairing with drought conditions to exhaust the longevity of the snowpack. According to the National Integrated Drought Information System, 88 percent of Gallatin County is currently unusually dry; 40 percent of the county is considered to be in a moderate drought.

"Snow acts as a reservoir with a slow release into the river," explained Lilly Deford, restoration director for the Gallatin Watershed Council. The river requires a certain amount of water to support a healthy ecosystem throughout the summer—as well as recreation activities such as whitewater rafting and fishing. Although the snow water equivalent, the amount of water in the snow, was between 90 and 100 percent of normal for the Gallatin Basin in March and April, the unusually high temperatures are depleting snow faster than normal.

Data from the Lone Mountain SNOTEL monitoring station indicated that the snowpack had completed melting nine days sooner than the median.

Earlier runoff due to unusual heat translates to below average streamflows, particularly for the latter end of the summer, explained Kristin Gardner, executive director for GRTF. "That also means we'll likely see warmer water temperatures," Gardner added, as shallow water heats up quicker.

Based on the weather in the Gallatin River Basin so far this spring and summer, Deford and Gardner agree there are potential concerns arising as a result of the depleted snowpack. The warm, shallow water provides an ecosystem in which harmful algae can thrive.

The stringy green Cladophora algae first appeared in a significant bloom on the main stem of the Gallatin in 2018 and appeared again last summer, said Gardner.

Apart from casting the river in a green "visceral ickiness," as Deford put it, the algae also



Gallatin River Task Force employees work along the banks of the Gallatin River in June. PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLATIN RIVER TASK FORCE.

impacts the health of other organisms that call the Gallatin home. "When you have significant algae blooms, you also can see decreases in the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water," Gardner said, which makes the water less suitable for trout and the aquatic insects that the trout feed on.

The warm water itself poses risk to the trout as well, said Patrick Byorth, Montana water project director for Trout Unlimited, an organization committed to river conservation and restoration nationally. Trout are cold-water fish that can compensate for a few weeks of warm summer water by moving up tributaries with cooler water.

"Now we're looking at probably a month or a month and a half of hot water time," said Byorth. "That's stressful enough to eliminate a cold-water fishery if it happens too many years in a row."

In other words, this year's weather and snowmelt is unsustainable for the Gallatin's trout population in the long run, threatening to drive them up to cooler water more permanently.

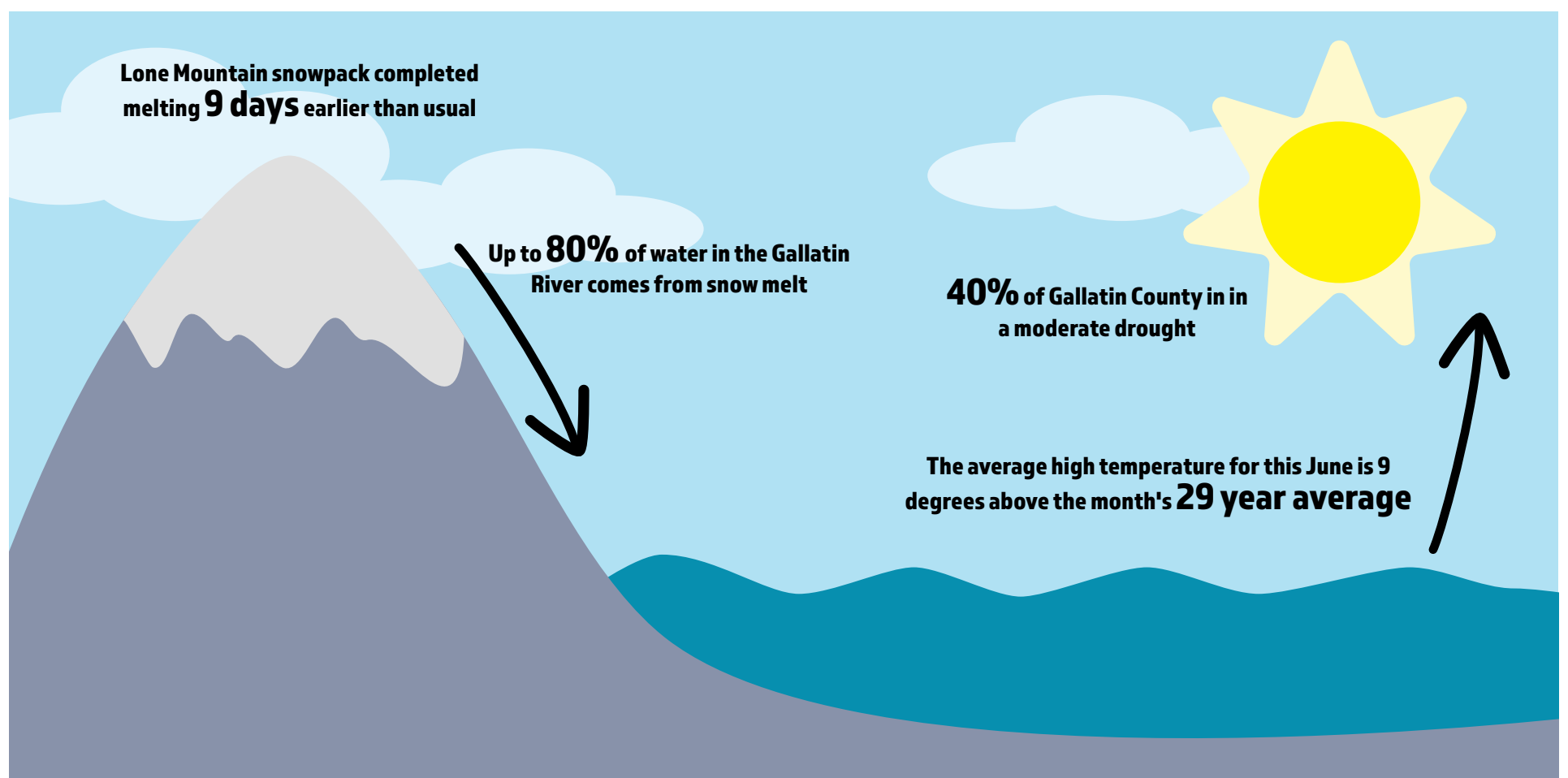
Luckily, there are measures the community can take to help mitigate the risks posed to the Gallatin's ecology. Although the shallow, warm water provides a strong base for the algae blooms, the algae require nutrients to truly thrive, which come primarily from leakage out of Big Sky. The shallower the water, the more concentrated nutrients in the river will be, making it all the more important to be conscious of what we let flow into the Gallatin.

Emily O'Connor, conservation manager at GRTF, said individuals and businesses alike can help keep nutrients out of the river by properly maintaining their septic systems as well as using sustainable landscaping practices that require less irrigation and fertilizers.

One of the easiest ways the community can have an impact on keeping the river healthy, said O'Connor, is conserving water wherever possible. "I would encourage everyone in our day-to-day practices to make choices that help protect water quality and quantity," she added, explaining that we occupy space in a very sensitive ecosystem.

Byorth expanded upon this, explaining that "restoring the sponge" (aka our area's wetlands) is vital in increasing the amount of water the landscape can hold after snow runoff. The river can pull from groundwater storage in the later, hotter months. "If we can build resiliency by improving our wetlands so there's that nice blanket of really rich, spongy soil, we can restore conductivity into our tributary streams," Byorth said. "Then our fish can adjust to that changing pattern."

From a community standpoint, it's important that when you're down enjoying time by the river to pay attention to signs that it may be in stress, such as spotting green algae or unusually low water, and make efforts to conserve water and leak fewer nutrients into the river. The GRTF, GWC and TU, along with other organizations in the area, are working hard on conservation efforts, but "there's always more to do," according to O'Connor, and the community—long-term residents and short-term visitors alike—play a major role in protecting the Gallatin so we can enjoy it for years to come.



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11am-6pm - 6th Annual Big Sky Art Auction

FRIDAY, JULY 16

6pm - Big Sky Community Rodeo at the Big Sky Events Arena

9pm - Community Street Dance featuring Dirtwire - Town Center Avenue

TUESDAY, JULY 20

10am-4pm - Western Sports Foundation/Big Sky Bravery - Black Bull Golf Tournament

6pm - Big Sky Bingo Night

9pm - Live Music featuring Dammit Lauren and The Well

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

3pm - Mutton Bustin Pre-Ride Competition at the Big Sky Events Arena

5pm - Farmers Market

THURSDAY, JULY 22

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open

2pm - PBR Meet & Greet

4pm - Live Music

7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Night 1 Bull Riding at the Big Sky Events Arena

8:30pm - Music in the Mountains Concert - featuring Magnolia Boulevard

FRIDAY, JULY 23

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open

2pm - PBR Meet & Greet

4pm - Live Music

7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Night 2 Bull Riding at the Big Sky Events Arena

Live Music Following Bull Riding - Jason Boland & The Stragglers

SATURDAY, JULY 24

12-6pm - Big Sky PBR Basecamp Vendor Village Open

2pm - PBR Meet & Greet

4pm - Live Music

7pm - 10th Annual Big Sky PBR Championship Night 3 Bull Riding at the Big Sky Events Arena

Live Music Following Bull Riding - Robert Earl Keen

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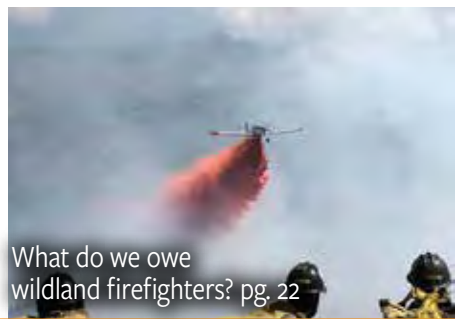
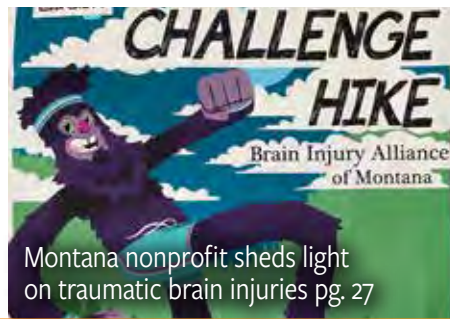
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**Events and timing subject to change; stay tuned to bigskypbr.com for the most current events schedule*



OUTLAW
EVENTS

SECTION 2:

ENVIRONMENT &
OUTDOORS, HEALTH,
SPORTS AND TRAVELWhat do we owe
wildland firefighters? pg. 22Montana nonprofit sheds light
on traumatic brain injuries pg. 27

Weekenders Guide: Missoula pg. 31

Yellowstone Club advances wastewater snowmaking project

With DEQ permit in hand, private club moves toward actuating historical initiative

BY BELLA BUTLER AND GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – On June 8, in the midst of a water shortage in Big Sky and early summer drought statewide, the Yellowstone Club, a private residential, ski and golf club near Big Sky, obtained the first permit in Montana to recycle treated wastewater for snowmaking.

The club currently uses freshwater to make snow, and, according to its proposal, using recycled wastewater instead could result in a net benefit of 25-million-plus gallons of water to the local aquifer and watershed.

Rich Chandler, environmental manager for the Yellowstone Club reported that 75 to 80 percent of the water will be sourced from the Big Sky County Water and Sewer District and 20 percent will be drawn from the YC Wastewater Treatment Plant.

“Fortunately, we have the opportunity to do a great project that will help conserve our limited water supply and protect the watershed,” Chandler said in a June 8 press release. “Hopefully there are more projects coming online like this in the future.”

In Big Sky, water is increasingly limited as demand rises. A graph shared at a Jan. 19 Big Sky County Water and Sewer meeting illustrates a deficit in water demand and supply occurring around 2024. June drought reports in Montana show a drying trend throughout most of the state in recent years, including in Gallatin and Madison counties.

Proponents of the snowmaking initiative say that the process will produce water that’s even cleaner than the treated wastewater currently used to water four area golf courses. When the water is blasted through the snow gun, it freezes, reducing the amount of E. coli in the water, explained Kristin Gardner, executive director of the Gallatin River Task Force. After the snowmaking process, the amount of nutrients in the water is reduced even further by microbes in the soil and by the plants that uptake it.

“When you’re putting that water back into the watershed, you’re essentially building a water bank that can supply our streams and aquifers with water later in the year when we need it most,” Gardner said. “We see this as a huge win for both water supply resiliency and for supporting our ski industry and economy.”

Patrick Byorth, Montana water project director with Trout Unlimited, a national nonprofit organization with local chapters committed to river conservation and restoration, also emphasized the benefits of the project to the surrounding ecosystems.

“I have to applaud the Yellowstone Club’s significant investment, leadership and innovation,” Byorth said. “More clean, cold water is just plain good for the Gallatin, its fisheries and downstream agriculture.”

The idea to use treated wastewater to make snow in Big Sky was born in 2011 when GRTF conducted a pilot study to test the concept. That study expanded to include the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and formed the basis for the club’s current project.



In 2011, the Gallatin River Task Force conducted a pilot study on the YC snowmaking project. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE CLUB

In 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency added snowmaking as a viable option in its 2012 Guidelines for Water Reuse. Additionally, Montana DEQ, under Gov. Brian Schweitzer, created additional reuse standards for reclaimed water disposal and included snowmaking as one option.

A diverse group of stakeholders in 2017 formed the Big Sky Sustainable Water Solutions Forum to identify and solve water-resource issues in the Upper Gallatin Watershed. Chandler was a part of the forum when it formed and said the plans and support from that group created the foundation for the snowmaking project.

In March 2020, the Yellowstone Club applied for a permit to discharge wastewater into surface water through snowmaking. Montana DEQ completed an environmental assessment to analyze the proposal, required by the Montana Environmental Protection Act when potential impacts of a proposal are unclear.

The assessment considered the proposed action's impacts on 23 resources, from air quality to soil quality to less tangible resources like social structures and cultural uniqueness. The assessment found that impacts to all resources considered would be insignificant or not present.

The assessment received what Jon Kenning, Montana DEQ's water protection bureau chief, later recounted in a press release as "an outpouring of support letters" from several members of the public, local entities and environmental organizations like GRTF, American Rivers, Big Sky County Water and Sewer District, Lone Mountain Land Club with the Spanish Peaks Mountain Club, among others.

But not everyone supported the concept. John Meyer, executive director of Bozeman-based Cottonwood Environmental Law Center, wrote that the assessment failed to "analyze the impacts of pharmaceuticals reaching surface waters." DEQ responded by stating that "pharmaceuticals" is a general term and an "emerging area of science and research concerning water quality." DEQ has not yet adopted water quality standards for pharmaceuticals, according to its response to Meyer.

Cottonwood is currently suing DEQ in another matter related to the designation of the Gallatin River as an Outstanding Resource Water. The law center is joined in that suit by fellow plaintiffs Gallatin Wildlife Association and Montana Rivers, both of which also provided comment alongside Meyer critiquing the environmental assessment of the Yellowstone Club's snowmaking proposal.

The assessment evaluated the effluent's impact on nearby Muddy and Third Yellow Mule creeks. Meyer, Gallatin Wildlife Association and Montana Rivers also issued comments about the assessment's failure to consider the impact to the Gallatin River and disclose those impacts to the public.

DEQ stated in response that the permit the Yellowstone Club applied for regulates point-source discharges to the creeks and no discharge directly into

the Gallatin is permitted. DEQ added that the permit comes with effluent limits and monitoring requirements to protect "beneficial uses" of the creeks.

"Just because DEQ approved of something doesn't mean that it's the best policy," Gallatin Wildlife Association President Clint Nagel told EBS in a June 15 interview.

The environmental assessment considered the Yellowstone Club's proposal against an alternative they identified as "no action." This would have meant denying the permit, according to the assessment, leaving the club to work with the water and sewer district to find other options for effluent disposal, including "potential direct discharge to the Gallatin River," according to the assessment.

Meyer stated in a June 14 interview with EBS that he would be challenging the permit issued to the Yellowstone Club with a lawsuit.

In the wake of Montana DEQ's approval of the club's discharge permit, GRTF will be conducting a new study in Big Sky, likely starting in the fall of 2021, to assess the viability of Big Sky Resort and Spanish Peaks Mountain Club also using treated wastewater to make snow.

The study, funded by Lone Mountain Land Company, Big Sky Resort, Big Sky County Water Sewer District and Big Sky Resort Area District, will focus on three factors: environmental impacts, the snow amounts the resorts want to make, and how much water exists in the water and sewer district. Gardner said the current goal is to work with the partners to understand their needs and to gather the necessary data needed to apply for a DEQ permit.

Taylor Middleton, president and COO of Big Sky Resort, provided public comment in favor of the club's initiative.

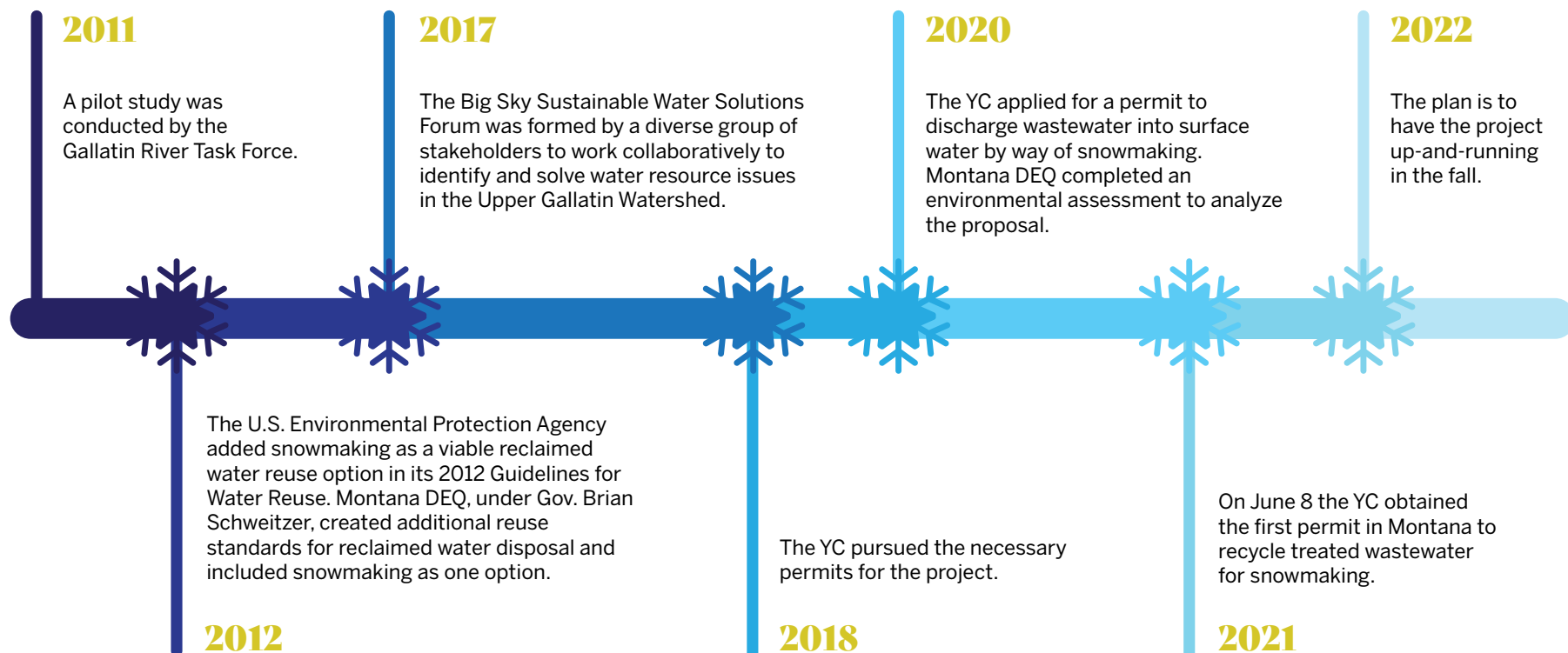
"All communities must collect, treat and dispose of waste, but few do it as well as Big Sky has for the past 50 years, recycling 100% of our wastewater on golf courses," Middleton wrote in a statement to EBS. "Now, our rapidly growing community is doubling down on that recycling commitment and using snowmaking technology to attain it. There's no reason we can't look back in another 50 years and be proud that we're still a 100% recycle community."

For now, the Yellowstone Club is looking to its own next steps. It's currently working through the engineering review process with DEQ, according to Chandler, which he expects to wrap up within 90 days. The club will then start looking to award construction contracts.

The last piece of the puzzle will be obtaining a stormwater permit, Chandler said, adding that the goal is to get the project up and running by fall of 2022.

"I hope that we get to see expanded use of treated wastewater now throughout our community and Montana," Gardner said. "I really do see it as a huge benefit in proactive management measures toward those predicted changes in climate."

YC Snowmaking Timeline:



Home Rivers Initiative comes to the Gallatin

Simms Fishing and Trout Unlimited partner on three-year project

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

GALLATIN VALLEY – There's a new conservation cowboy in town by the name of Connor Parrish. His mission: To protect and conserve the Gallatin River with funding from Simms Fishing Products and the help of many local partners.

In December of 2020, Simms announced a three-year partnership with Trout Unlimited, the focus of which is on TU's Home Rivers Initiative, a multi-regional program that places full-time TU staff members in a watershed to live and work.

To make Parrish's placement in Bozeman possible, Simms has committed \$250,000 over the next three years to fund his efforts to reconnect and restore the Gallatin. Simms held a welcome event on June 3 to bring Parrish into the fold, as well as gather local organizations that will be a part of the project.

"The purpose of the gathering on Thursday was to unite all of these different organizations who are fighting the good fight, trying to keep our waters as healthy as possible," said John Frazier, manager of public relations and content and digital marketing at Simms. "We strongly believe that significant positive conservation impacts are accomplished easier when community comes together and works towards a common cause."

On a 90-degree day, guests gathered in a white tent in the parking lot of Simms headquarters near Four Corners to mingle and hear from Parrish, who serves as project manager, as well as Simms CEO Casey Sheahan, Frazier and Montana Water Project Director at TU, Patrick Byorth.

Byorth emphasized the amount of wild land in the region urging the importance of conserving and protecting the area. He referenced 10 other projects underway along the Gallatin River and offered praise to Parrish, who he said is "well educated" and experienced in his field.

The idea for Simms to engage in this partnership was born out of a desire to give back to their own backyard, according to Frazier. Additionally, with the shutdowns spurred by COVID-19, fishing license sales increased according to Diane Bristol, senior director of employee and community engagement, which prompted Simms to consider conservation projects a little closer to home.

"A lot of our waters are a stone's throw away from our headquarters here," Frazier said. "We wanted to do something significant with conservation and we wanted to do something close to home. For us the Gallatin is such an amazing resource and it's right here. It's not only vital to our local economy but also to the community of Bozeman itself so it really made a ton of sense to place a significant conservation focus on the Gallatin."

Bristol concurred with Frazier and emphasized the collaborative nature of the Home Rivers Initiative.

"We really like this idea of bringing it together under one effort, and then working to support however we can," said Bristol. "The nice thing is that Connor is now doing all of that legwork and identifying the opportunities, versus having these little bits and pieces to figure out the who, what and where."

There are many local organizations that will be joining in on this effort, a few of which were at the event on June 3. In addition to the Madison Gallatin Trout Unlimited Chapter, some of the partners are: the Gallatin Watershed Council, Gallatin River Task Force, Montana Aquatic Resources Services, Four Corners Foundation, Custer Gallatin National Forest and Fish Wildlife and Parks.

These organizations are also joined by 10 Barrel Brewing, which released a limited summer ale named Reel Good in partnership with Simms. A portion of every purchase of Reel Good will go toward supporting the Home Rivers Initiative.



Simms employees and representatives from various local partners gathered on June 3 to welcome Connor Parrish into his new role as project manager of the Gallatin Home Rivers Initiative. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER



Volunteers get their hands dirty at a riparian planting event that was part of the Dry Creek Restoration Project. PHOTO BY JOHN FRAZIER/SIMMS FISHING PRODUCTS

Parrish comes to Bozeman after completing his master's degree at Central Washington University in 2017. He has plenty of experience working in the realm of fisheries as well as nonprofits.

"I really appreciated not only his expertise and his experience related to this role, I really liked that he's so passionate about [the work,]" said Bristol who served on the interviewing team that chose Parrish. "He's coming in full of energy and curiosity I love that too."

Parrish's work will focus on community outreach as well as planting and cleanup events among other things.

"My goals are to get the community aware of issues going on in their own watershed," Parrish said. "There's a lot of people who have grown up here and maybe are more familiar with it, but this area is growing really quickly, and people are coming here because of the beauty of this place and because of its natural resources."

Parrish's efforts will be overseen by Byorth.

"I think Connor represents the typical Trout Unlimited employee," Byorth said. "He's well educated, has a great experience in the field of stream restoration, and has a deep commitment to improving fisheries and land and watersheds."

Byorth shared TU's larger strategy for the Gallatin River Basin in a June 8 interview with EBS, which includes efforts to protect and enhance stream flows and to open up barriers where fish need to pass back and forth.

"Gallatin HRI is very timely because we're at the confluence of a great period of population growth and development," Byorth said. "The wild lands that surround us are in a transitional period where it gives us a good opportunity, as conservationists, to work in a growing community, a changing community, and hopefully set a pathway where we can sustain our cold-water fisheries well into the future."

There have already been activations of the Gallatin HRI project since January of 2021 including the Dry Creek Restoration Project, featuring a tree planting in May. Simms employees went outside and got their hands dirty volunteering at that critical point of the Gallatin to help reinforce the stream bank and provide riparian habitat. There was also a willow planting volunteer effort earlier in the year.

While Parrish doesn't have a concrete plan for what projects will happen yet, he shared some goals he has for taking care of the Gallatin.

"Trying to find different ways to conserve water to keep water clean is going to be the central goal of this partnership," he said. "Whether we're doing that through actual on the ground restoration projects or doing community engagement and we are all going to have that goal in mind."

Parrish said that there will be more riparian planting efforts along with projects that help reduce sediment that goes into streams and fixing undersized culverts.

"I think people consider the Gallatin to be a pretty healthy waterway, and it is, but we are trying to make sure that we've got plans in place that keep it that way," Frazier said. "We don't want it to become an endangered river where you have to be more reactive and make things happen quick. We're trying to make it as healthy as possible for future generations."

Bristol also chimed in on the longevity of the project expressing the hope that these efforts will not end with this collaboration.

"What we really like about the Home Rivers Initiative, is building the foundation for this to continue to focus on the Gallatin River forever," Bristol said. "Having these people working together establishing this format is something that we would like to see continue beyond when we term the project complete."

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Manhattan looks to expand trails system

Project part of nearly 4,000-mile cross-country trail system

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

MANHATTAN, Mont. – Local trails organizations are building 7 miles of new trails to connect the Headwaters Trail System in Three Forks with the Manhattan Trail System in Manhattan. The effort will ultimately become part of the Great American Rail Trail system, a project that will connect the country through a network of trails spanning 3,700 miles from Washington, D.C. to Washington state.

The Manhattan Trail System is a nonprofit founded in 2019 to construct a trail between Manhattan and the Headwaters trail in Three Forks. The two local trail systems have partnered on the project and garnered support from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a nonprofit organization founded in 1986 to create a national network of trails in the U.S. by converting former railroad corridors into trails that are more accessible to a wider majority of people.

The Great American Rail Trail effort was launched in 2019 by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and will be a multiuse trail spanning 12 states. The trail is currently 53 percent complete with 2,000 existing miles on 150 different trails already in place. Fifty-four miles have been added to the route since the effort launched in 2019.

Local efforts are led by Buck Buchanan, president of the Manhattan Trail System, and Gene Townsend, chairperson of the Headwaters Trail System, with national support from Kevin Belanger, manager of trail planning with the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

Belanger works closely with local organizations to assist in planning and provide support. He said they recently finished a series of national Zoom meetings where representatives from each state provided progress reports.

“The enthusiasm in Montana is very infectious, and I love speaking to the folks in Montana because they show up in full force,” Belanger said.

Townsend and Buchanan are planning to connect the trail from the Gallatin River in Manhattan to the Jefferson River in Three Forks. To do this, the two groups will need to build approximately 8 miles of trail from the west edge of Manhattan through Logan to connect with the Headwaters Trail System along U.S. Highway 10 West, which parallels Interstate 90.

Once that smaller piece is in place, the next step, according to Buchanan, is to expand east from Four Corners, connecting to Belgrade and eventually into Bozeman near MAP Brewing Company. That Bozeman connection would then provide access to all trails in Bozeman, including the M Trail.

The ultimate goal, Buchanan said, would be to hook into the Rail Tail creating a continuous stretch from Livingston to Butte where he said further work on the network is being done.

“There’s just so many moving parts,” Buchanan said. “It’s unbelievable and that’s why it hasn’t been done before, because it’s really complicated to try to pull this thing off.”

Buchanan explained that the main challenge, now that the approximately 7 miles of trail have been proposed and garnered support, is obtaining the necessary land easements.

“It makes sense for us to work together and see what we can do and it’s a little more challenging than it used to be because it’s a little harder to get easements alongside the state highways,” Townsend said. “In this area that we’re going to be working there will also be some challenges presented to us because of the railroad.”



This map shows the proposed connector trail between Manhattan and Three Forks as well as the larger master plan to eventually expand to Bozeman. MAP COURTESY OF BUCK BUCHANAN/MANHATTAN TRAIL SYSTEM



The Great American Rail Trail will comprise almost 4,000 miles of trails spanning 12 states once it is complete. MAP COURTESY OF KEVIN BELANGER/RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY

Despite these challenges, both Buchanan and Townsend emphasized the benefits of the project, which include giving bikers a safe alternative route to highways and a boost to local economies.

“I think there’s a lot of enthusiasm, especially in Gallatin County, and I’d really like to think in Montana, for the trail systems,” Townsend said. “People are starting to realize what we can do and what’s been done, and I think it’ll happen.”

Buchanan also voiced his faith in the project along with wider support he has received.

“I haven’t talked to a single person, and that is including the railroad and the department of transportation, that say it’s a bad idea,” he said.

So far, with help from Stahly Engineering, a Montana based civil engineering and survey firm, Buchanan and Townsend have an initial survey and numbers for the connector trail.

Funding for the project will come entirely from fundraising efforts and private donations, Buchanan said. Manhattan Trails has already raised several thousand dollars, he added, and moving forward, 10 percent of all funds raised will be earmarked for maintenance.

Each of the partners in the project had only praise for the others as they work together to make this new trail a reality.

“Buck has been great, and he is the right kind of persistent,” Belanger said of Buchanan. “He will reach out to you if he hasn’t heard from you in a while with some updates and new ideas and always wants to be asking questions and getting advice and running things. He’s a great advocate to have locally.”

Buchanan in turn offered praise to Townsend who has been involved with the Headwaters Trail System since 1997.

“He was the driving force behind all that stuff there wouldn’t be a trail to connect to if it wasn’t for Gene Townsend,” he said.

A solid timeline for construction of the connector trail is yet to be established since the project is still raising funds and securing required easements, but Buchanan emphasized the importance of this project to the area.

“I think it’d be an economic boost for the towns of Manhattan, Logan and Three Forks,” he said. “Trails are something that seem to come up in everybody’s growth policy. Citizens are interested in having access to trails for outside recreation and I think that this plays right into that.”

Visit manhattantrailsystem.com for more information on the project or to make a donation.

What do we owe wildland firefighters?



BY JONATHON GOLDEN
WRITERS ON THE RANGE

“It’s like having gasoline out there,” said Brian Steinhardt, forest fire zone manager for Prescott and Coconino national forests in Arizona, in a recent AP story about the increasingly fire-prone West.

Now something else is happening — and at the worst possible time.

Federal firefighters are leaving the workforce and taking their training and experience with them. The inability of federal agencies to offer competitive pay

and benefits is creating hundreds of wildland firefighting vacancies.

Vacancies, of course, limit how much federal firefighters can do. If Western communities want to be protected, they need to ensure that their firefighters receive better pay and benefits.

In my 11 years of work as a wildland firefighter, I’ve managed aircraft, trained people and run fires myself, but I also did outreach and recruitment for the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. I know how hard it is for hiring managers to make 2,000 hours of grueling work, crammed into six exhausting months, sound appealing when the pay is \$13.45 an hour. The pay doesn’t come close to matching the true demands or everyday dangers of the job.

Federal wildland firefighters, by necessity, are transient workers. During the fire season — now nearly year-round — they must be available to travel anywhere in the United States at any time. And to advance in their career, they have to move to other federal duty stations to gain more qualifications.

Finding affordable housing has always been a problem for career firefighters on a federal salary. To make matters worse, federal agencies revoked the “Transfer of Station” stipend for career employees, which helped offset the cost of moving. Just recently, a national forest supervisor also revoked a “boot stipend.” It might sound minor, but it isn’t: When you’re in the firefighting business, boots tough enough to save your life can easily cost you \$500.

Some states aren’t relying on the government to act quickly. “We aren’t just waiting for the next crisis to hit,” said California Gov. Gavin Newsom, in establishing an \$80.74 million Emergency Fund that delivers an additional 1,256 seasonal firefighters to boost CALFIRE’s ranks. This Emergency Fund is in addition to the governor’s \$1 billion budget request for California’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

In Washington, state legislators unanimously passed a \$125 million package that will enable the state’s Natural Resources Department to hire 100 more firefighters. The legislation furthers the state’s efforts to restore forest health and creates a \$25 million fund to ensure community preparedness around the state.

Utah’s House Bill 65, recently signed into law, appropriates money to help Utah’s communities offset the cost of wildfire suppression. Most importantly, it commissions a study to evaluate the current pay plan for firefighters within Utah’s Natural Resources Department.

The bill’s sponsor, Rep. Casey Snider, was amazed to learn that frontline wildland firefighters make more money at McDonald’s: “These positions are critical,” he said. “They are the first ones on fires.” This year, Utah has already had five times the number of wildfires it normally experiences in a year.

And firefighters are organizing and speaking up. The Grassroots Wildland Firefighters is working to halt the exodus of firefighters from federal agencies by advocating for pay parity with state and local fire protection agencies. The group also supports initiatives to assist the physical and mental health of firefighters and their families. The statistics they highlight are shocking: Wildland firefighters have a suicide rate 30 times higher than the average. They also experience high incidences of cardiovascular disease and lung cancer.

There is talk on the federal level of creating a permanent, year-round firefighting workforce. I think this is a necessary step, but it won’t fix the workforce capacity issue unless increased pay and benefits are used to encourage the recruitment and retention of federal firefighters.

We all know that today’s wildfires are longer, more damaging and more frequent than ever before. We also know that men and women are putting their lives on the line for less than they’d earn at a McDonald’s.

Our firefighters do all this to protect our lives, our forests and our communities. We owe them at least a living wage and a chance for a healthy life. I hope more states and legislators will start paying attention. This is a debt that needs to be paid.




Jonathon Golden lives in Moab, Utah, and is a contributor to *Writers on the Range*, writersontherange.org, a nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively conversation about the West. He left firefighting in 2019 to found a consulting company that focuses on conservation and national security.



Jonathon Golden worked for 11 years as a wildland firefighter and he unpacks the disconnect between the demands of the job and the benefits. PHOTO COURTESY OF WRITERS ON THE RANGE



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THE NEW WEST



BY TODD WILKINSON
EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

For 20 years, Barbara Moritsch worked as an ecologist and interpretive naturalist for the National Park Service, a federal agency counted among the most popular in terms of how citizens view those who work in government.

Her job involved helping translate to the public the sophisticated knowable and unknowable mechanics of how nature works. But one thing she noticed in parks like Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon is that while giant ancient trees like redwoods and sequoias were protected—spared from industrial logging—absent were the resident mammalian predators. Like grizzly bears that are on the California state flag. And wolves.

Both were killed off.

So it was, after Moritsch left civil service and settled in Idaho that she thought she might have a peaceful good life reflecting on her experiences in the great outdoors. She thought it was amazing that wolves were reintroduced to wilderness areas in central Idaho the same winters they were historically restored in Yellowstone.

That, of course, was not the end of the story but it has brought a new chapter in wildlife conservation that sought to correct Draconian frontier attitudes that eradicated species only to, in recent years, have those attitudes return with a vengeance.

Moritsch has written about national parks, including a recent book titled “The Soul of Yosemite: Finding, Defending and Saving the Valley’s Wild Nature.” Not long ago, she published a novel, “Wolf Time,” that aims not only to carry an entertaining narrative but demonstrate how sentience exists in humans and other beings that evolved in nature together.

Below is part of a conversation with Moritsch.

Todd Wilkinson: *“Wolf Time” is a novel. Without giving too much away, let’s use Dr. Jane Goodall’s own words to describe it as a blend of fact-based natural history about Canis lupus and fantasy. The main characters are both wolves and people, with the latter given an opportunity to see the world through the eyes of these long-mythologized animals. How did you come up with the plot?*

Barbara Moritsch: The plot unrolled as I wrote the story. I had no overarching plan at the outset. I was trained and worked as a scientist, but I’ve also been a student of shamanism for 12 years. This alternative worldview played a large role in “Wolf Time.” For most of the writing, I’d sit in my recliner, turn on an N. Carlos Nakai flute CD, close my eyes and let the wolves dictate. I believe we all have an inherent connection to other species, but we need to accept this as real, and then take the time to listen to what they have to say.

T.W.: *You have a background in science. You’ve worked as a park ranger in Yosemite, Sequoia, Kings Canyon, and Death Valley, been an environmental educator, wildland forest firefighter, and you’re a writer and committed conservationist. What is it about wolves?*

B.M.: I did not plan to write a book about wolves. The wolves, in a sense, came to me in a series of encounters, as well as what some would call dreams, and told me they needed help to tell the story of their lives—their joys, their sorrows and the persecution they’ve been subject to at the hands of humans. Apparently, though, the seed was planted a long time ago. Last month while sorting old paperwork, I came upon a letter of recommendation on my behalf I’d completely forgotten about. It was addressed to Dr. Rolf Peterson at Michigan Tech—apparently, I was applying for a graduate program to study wolves in Isle Royale.

T.W.: *Sometimes it’s said that issues or subjects cannot easily be confronted head on because they cause people to automatically order themselves along factional lines. What do you hope to accomplish with “Wolf Time?”*

B.M.: I wrote “Wolf Time” as a novel filled with facts to educate readers and dispel some of the myths around wolves. I hoped to reach a more diverse

After civil service, Moritsch fights for wolves—in new novel

audience than would have chosen to read nonfiction, and to increase the number of wolf advocates out there in the world. All of the more-than-human species need our support, and the wolves have stepped up as emissaries.

T.W.: *You live in Idaho. Why is it so hard to overcome cultural mythology?*

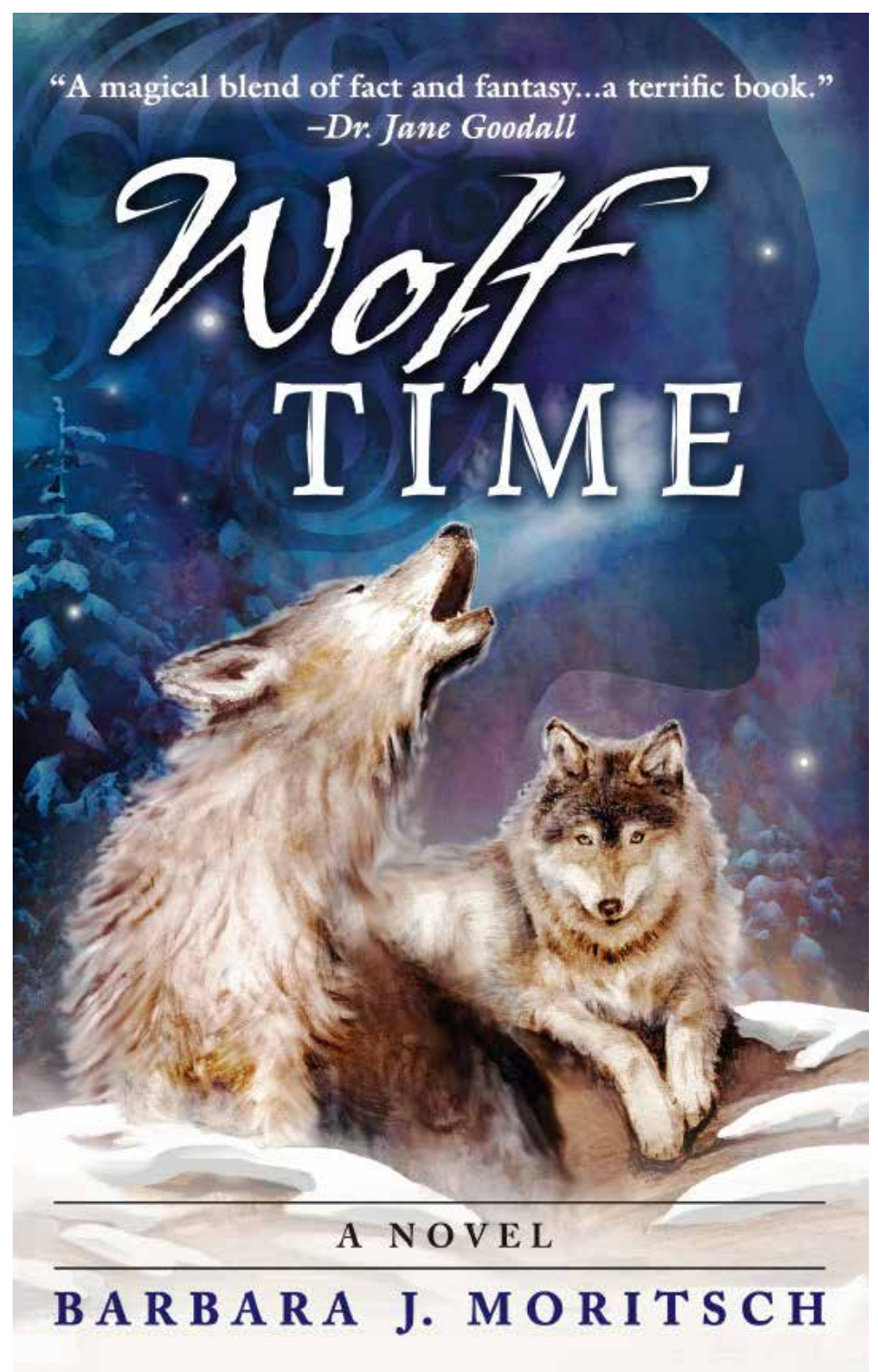
B.M.: Relative to wolves, the outdated cultural myths stem in part from misguided religious teachings about human dominion over other species. Until we reinterpret the Bible, that mythos is likely to persist. Weakness in our education systems, which too often lack a grounding in ecological principles, also allows the myths to persist.

And even if we revise western religion and education, if people have something to gain from the outdated myths, they will use them to their advantage. Those who fear a loss of revenue because of wolves, those who like the thrill associated with trophy hunting or “thrill killing,” and those who have need of a scapegoat—something to serve as a target for their unresolved anger and fear—will perpetuate those evil wolf myths forever. Wolves have been such targets for a very long time.

T.W.: *Your main human protagonist is a woman wolf biologist named Sage McAllister. How much of Barbara Moritsch is present in the spirit of Sage?*

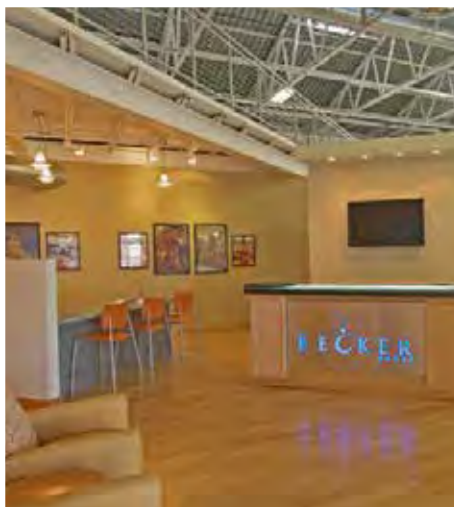
B.M.: Quite a large helping, but I infused a bit of myself into Sage’s niece, Sunny, as well.

Editor’s note: “Wolf Time” is available wherever good books are sold. We recommend ordering a copy from your favorite local independent bookseller.





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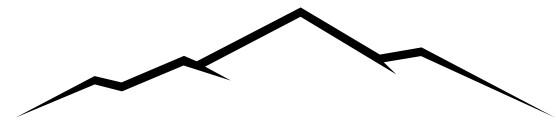


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Dry fly season is here on our local waters

BY PATRICK STRAUB
EBS FISHING COLUMNIST

During one of my first seasons as a fly fishing guide in the mid-1990s, I remember sitting on the tailgate with a veteran Yellowstone River guide. We'd just wrapped up a day of guiding. He admitted to me his disdain for the salmonfly hatch. "It's so anticlimactic, overblown and over-hyped," he told me. "It's after the salmonfly hatch that I love," my friend continued. "It is the golden stoneflies, yellow sallies, pale morning duns, caddis and spruce moths that get my blood pumping."

He's got a good point.

Although the salmonflies will garner much of the hype on our local waters these next few weeks, but after the big bugs hatch, that doesn't mean it's time to put away the fly floatant and your reach cast. The coming weeks are perhaps the best of the year for catching trout on dry flies, so be sure to have some of the following patterns in your vest or pack or stuck in your ball cap.

Chubby Chernobyl. Created to imitate a large stonefly or grasshopper, this foam-bodied fly floats high and is easy to see. It can imitate a golden stonefly, a yellow sally stonefly or a large caddis. Many anglers will use this fly as an attractor dry fly—in other words, one that can be seen—and tie a smaller dry fly behind it as a floating dropper.

Bloom's Hi-Vis Parachute Caddis. This fly has eclipsed the Goddard in popularity for a fast-water caddis. But the fly's creator, Dave Bloom, honed this pattern on the technical waters of the Missouri River. Because its roots lie with picky tailwater trout, this fly takes the bacon for the must-have caddis pattern on our local waters. It floats well and its parachute post is tied in a variety of colors, which makes it easy to see in low-light conditions.

RS2 emerger in PMD or yellow. The RS2 was created more than 30 years ago by Colorado angler and fly-tier Rim Chung. The name is short for "Rim's Semblance No. 2," since it was the second in a series of flies he designed. As our rivers drop and clear, Pale Morning Duns will hatch and this summer season the mayfly will inhabit shallow, riffle-run water. A first impression suggests this fly is meant to be fished subsurface or in the surface film, which can be effective. However, if your eyesight allows you to see a size 16 or 18 RS2 on the surface, you stand a very good chance of more hookups when PMDs are hatching. If you have subpar eyesight, tie an RS2 as a dropper off a Bloom's HiVis Parachute Caddis.

Rubberleg Stimulator or Stimi-Chew Toy. These patterns' roots lie in Randall Kaufmann's original Stimulator. As a kid, I rarely fished anything other than a yellow Stimulator. Today, a Stimulator will catch fish in some situations, but with the addition of rubber legs and an underwing on the Chew Toy, these two patterns are the 5G to my old analog. Tied to mostly imitate golden stoneflies and yellow sally stoneflies, the Stimi-Chew Toy in size 14 and 16 is ideal for mimicking a or small caddis.

Parachute Adams. Perhaps the most time-tested dry fly ever tied—imitating a mayfly dun—the Parachute Adams is a must-have. The white post is easy to see, it can be tied in a variety of colors, it floats well and it catches fish. Get some.

Spruce moth patterns. Be sure your dry-fly box has plenty of spruce moths. A caddis at its core, once a spruce moth lands on the water's surface, a nearby trout doesn't take long to notice. Some favorite patterns are the Snowshoe Spruce and the Elk Hair Spruce Moth; focus on sizes 14 and 16.

LaFontaine's Emergent Sparkle Pupa. A list without a Gary LaFontaine pattern? What do you think I am, a nymph fisherman? LaFontaine was passionate about flies and trout food, and he spent countless hours studying insects and creating their imitations. Similar to the RS2, this fly can serve double duty. When fished as a dry fly, only put floatant on the elk hair, allowing the fly to float on the surface while the dubbed body—or mix of hairs attached to the hook shank—helps to hold air by creating a bubble. LaFontaine surmised that as caddis hatch from a pupa to an adult they create a small air bubble. Good thing he enjoyed looking at caddis butts, because without this pattern a lot fewer fish would be caught.

In Norman Maclean's masterpiece "A River Runs Through It," a father tells his two sons—one of which is Norman—that Christ's disciples were fishermen and that John was Christ's favorite. Why? Because John was a dry-fly fisherman.

Editor's note: a similar version of this story ran in a 2015 edition of Explore Big Sky.

Patrick Straub has fished on five continents. He is the author of six books, including "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fly Fishing" and has been writing the Eddy Line for nine years. He was one of the largest outfitters in Montana, but these days he now only guides anglers who value quality over quantity.



As runoff is over and hatches of salmonflies also wane, the start of summer dry fly seasons kicks into gear. Be sure you are armed with a variety of proven dry fly patterns. From left to right, Chubby Chernobyl, Bloom's caddis, RS2, Stimi-Chew Toy, Parachute Adams, Spruce moth, and Emergent Sparkle Pupa. PHOTO BY PATRICK STRAUB



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Life 101

Are you being too nice?



BY LINDA ARNOLD
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

We all want to be nice, right? Well, yes, except when being “too nice” can actually hurt us.

Listen up, all you people pleasers. We all want people to like us. However, when you give yourself up in order to morph into other people’s expectations, that’s when you enter the danger zone. You may have done it so long that you live your life on autopilot.

You’ll know this when there’s a gnawing empty feeling inside and you can’t put your finger on why you feel this way. Outwardly, everything is going well. On the inside though, you feel numb—like something is missing.

Something IS missing—and it’s you!

Rocking the boat

If your tendency is to keep the peace at all costs, take a look at what it might be costing you.

Conflict can be messy, but avoiding it is not always the best route. You can end up delaying decisions and losing the respect of your friends, family and coworkers. Of course, you need to pick your battles. If you’re always sweeping things under the rug, they can come back to haunt you.

Getting clear

Handling conflict involves clear communication. If you sugarcoat your requests, don’t be surprised if you’re misunderstood. There’s also the passive aggressive approach. You don’t want to deal with the situation directly, so you drop hints and expect the other person to read your mind.

These situations can be tricky. Just think about the classic question, “Does this dress make me look fat?” Of course, you don’t want to crush your friend, but if your intention is to truly support her, you need to step up.

Think of some neutral statements you could use. “It’s not your best look,” is one that has always stuck with me. It doesn’t come across as insulting yet it is direct—and definitely conveys the message.

Emotional toolbox

The first step with a sticky wicket is always the hardest. Here are a few connector statements to set the stage. The other person is aware a situation is being addressed, but it avoids triggering any defense mechanisms.

- I realize there are some challenges with (fill in the blank).
- Have you thought about it from this angle?
- We need to look at some other options.
- This may not be the right time.
- That won’t work for me right now. Let’s explore some different approaches.
- I’d like to find a way to make this work, although I need your help.
- It makes sense to run this by the rest of the family first.

Being nice and being kind

There’s a big difference between being too nice and being kind.

The person who is too nice is externally motivated, says psychiatrist Marcia Sirota. “He or she is driven by the need for approval and validation, craving acceptance. The kind person is internally motivated, less concerned what others might think – and more interested in doing the right thing.”

We tend to respect a person who is kind, while we may look down on someone who is too nice. A kind person values him or herself and is able to handle conflict and constructive criticism. Often, those who are too nice have low self-esteem and are afraid to stand up for themselves.

What kind of person do you want to be?

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JACKSONHOLE.COM

Montana nonprofit sheds light on traumatic brain injuries

First-ever Big Sky hike offers support, advocacy

BY MIRA BRODY

BIG SKY –The Brain Injury Alliance of Montana will host the first-ever Bozeman-Big Sky Challenge Hike on Aug. 7 at Big Sky Resort to raise awareness and fundraise for their efforts to provide advocacy, community engagement and prevention for those affected by a traumatic brain injury.

According to the BIAMT, Montana sits between the second and third in the nation per capita for traumatic brain injury-related deaths. The organization’s executive director, John Bigart III, believes this is because Montanans like to work hard and play hard.

“The prevalence in the state of Montana is very significant,” said Bigart. “It always has been, and through COVID it just increased, because I think people were out playing and not just sitting at their desks.”

Many head injuries, particularly in Montana, are due to motor vehicle accidents, ATV crashes and also accidents related to slick roads and sidewalks, according to Bigart. Symptoms of a possible brain injury include: dizziness, persistent headaches, difficulty focusing and fatigue, all of which can be temporary or long-term. Some injuries can permanently affect someone’s ability to work, recreate and live their daily lives.

Despite the prevalence of head injuries however, budget cuts to healthcare services have left support and care for these victims few and far-between. In fact, every other state aside from Montana provides government funding for the services BIAMT provides. Through generous donors and sponsors, for the last 30 years BIAMT has been working as a nonprofit to make up for lacking state services and provide those suffering with the right resources to make recovery possible.

“If I’m in a car accident and I break my leg and I go to the doctor, the doctor can give me a pretty clear idea and treatment plan,” said Bigart. “With a brain injury that’s not possible because no two brain injuries are alike.”

In addition to working with victims post-injury, BIAMT coordinates events that encourage awareness and prevention, including helmet giveaways, concussion education and a statewide online Traumatic Brain Injury support group called the Puzzle Club.

Bigart says the helmet giveaways are his favorite—they often reach out to underserved populations, families that otherwise would not be able to afford protective gear, and teach kids the importance of wearing a helmet and fitting it correctly so they can get back out and play.

The Bozeman-Big Sky Challenge Hike will feature one-mile, three-mile and seven-mile hikes around the resort, as well as a virtual hike for those who cannot attend in person, but would like to show support otherwise. It is \$25 for an adult entry, \$10 for ages 13-17 and free for those 12 and under. Registration includes a t-shirt, lunch, a free three-month membership to Fuel Fitness and entry into a variety of fun prizes.

BIAMT is seeking sponsors of all levels—they offer sponsorship packages from \$500 to \$1,500 with a variety of benefits, the best of all is supporting an area nonprofit that supports those in need, as well as a day hiking in beautiful Big Sky Resort, says Bigart.

“Sponsors are protecting heads and saving brains by providing helmets for kids across Montana,” said Bigart. “They’re helping family members of victims of brain injuries and helping us to fulfill our mission of creating a better future for those impacted by brain injuries.”

Those looking to participate can sign up as an individual, a team or make a donation on their website, biamt.org.



The Big Sky Challenge Hike will take place at Big Sky Resort on Aug. 7, 2021. FLYER COURTESY OF THE BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF MONTANA



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Golf Tips: Keep it simple around the greens

BY MARK WEHRMAN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

It's no secret that the key to lower scores in golf is to have a proficient short game. The old adage of "drive for show and putt for dough" couldn't be more true. So, if you are someone that tends to "throw away" strokes around the green I hope you have set a goal to work on that part of your game.

Why is it important to improve our game around the greens? Because every golfer I talk to will agree that they have more fun on the course the better they play. So, how can we improve this part of our game without complicating the process too much? We can do this by keeping our technique simple and sticking to the basics.

First, when deciding what type of shot to play around the green follow this one simple guideline: putt whenever you can. Your average putt is going to be better than your average chip. If you are on the fringe around the green and caught between a putt and a chip you should go with the higher percentage shot, which is the putt.

If your ball is in the rough, now you have to either chip or pitch it.

There are two factors to consider when choosing which shot to play: how far do you need to fly the ball to land it on the green and, how much green do you have to work with once it starts



Mark Wehrman, head golf pro at the Big Sky Golf Course, demonstrates proper chipping and pitching setup. PHOTO BY WILL SCHIRCLIFF

rolling. If the shot consists of less time in the air and more time rolling on the ground, it means you should chip it, which is the higher percentage shot. This shot, the chip, is played with a less lofted club like a 7 or 8 iron. If the ball will spend more time in the air and less time on the ground it means you are pitching the ball, using a more lofted club to execute the shot.

When executing either one of these shots it is important to keep the technique simple. Make sure your ball placement is in the back of your stance, keep your weight forward, and make sure your hands are tilted ahead of the ball with the butt of the club pointed at your left pocket. This setup process is referred to as "BLT." Following these three simple setup rules, make a short backswing while not breaking your wrists and always accelerate through towards the target. Do not try to help or lift the ball in the air, instead make sure to hit down through the shot enabling the loft of the club to propel the ball in the air.

In summary, remember, putt whenever you can, chip when you can't putt and pitch the ball only when you have to.

If you follow these rules, and don't try to complicate the technique, keeping it simple by not breaking your wrists you will find success with whatever type of shot you are faced with when playing around the greens.

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Fundraiser for Mental Health Support in our Community

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See more details about events and our new summer schedule at santoshabigsky.com.



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All Levels Yoga

4:00 -5:00pm
Breathwork

MONDAY

9:00-10:15am
All Levels Yoga

4:00 -5:00pm
All Levels Yoga

TUESDAY

7:30-8:30am
Rise and Shine Yoga

9:00-10:00am
Yoga for Arthritis
& Chronic Pain

5:45-7:00pm
Heated Flow

WEDNESDAY

7:30-8:30am
All Levels Yoga

10:00-11:15am
All Levels Yoga

4:00 -5:00pm
All Levels Yoga

THURSDAY

7:30-8:30am
Rise and Shine Yoga

9:00-10:15am
All Levels
Vinyasa Flow Yoga

5:45-6:45pm
Heated Flow

FRIDAY

9:00-10:15am
All Levels Yoga

11:00-12:00pm
Community Yoga
In the Plaza

5:45-6:45pm
Breathwork

SATURDAY

9:00 - 10:15am
All Levels
Vinyasa Flow

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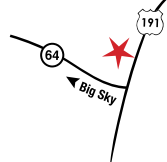
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BIG SKY SOFTBALL 2021

RESULTS FROM THE WEEK OF 6/7 TO 6/14

TEAM NAME	WIN	LOSS
1. YELLOWSTONE CLUB	II	
2. MULLETS		III
3. MOOSRKETEERS		III
4. CAB LIZARDS	I	II
5. BOMBERS	I	II
6. HILBILLY HUCKERS	II	
7. LPC – GOLDEN GOATS	I	
8. RUBES		III
9. BIG SKY BALLERS		II
10. BEARS	I	
11. THE CAVE	I	I
12. LOTUS PAD	I	
13. YETI DOGS	I	I
14. MILKIES	I	
15. WESTFORK WILDCATS		II



The Big Sky Co-ed Softball League is in full swing for summer 2021. Eleven weeks of play are planned with 15 teams in the league. Make sure to catch a game this summer at the Community Park on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday nights. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

WEEK 1	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 6/7 6:00pm Field 1	1	8	9
6:00pm Field 2	10	2	5
7:15pm Field 1	1	9	8
7:15pm Field 2	5	2	10
TUES 6/8 6:00pm Field 1	3	11	12
6:00pm Field 2	4	13	7
7:15pm Field 1	3	12	11
7:15pm Field 2	4	7	13
WED 6/9 6:00pm Field 1	14	5	4
6:00pm Field 2	15	6	2
7:15pm Field 1	4	5	14
7:15pm Field 2	2	6	15
WEEK 2	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 6/14 6:00pm Field 1	7	13	3
6:00pm Field 2	8	12	6
7:15pm Field 1	7	3	13
7:15pm Field 2	8	6	12
TUES 6/15 6:00pm Field 1	10	8	11
6:00pm Field 2	14	9	2
7:15pm Field 1	11	10	8
7:15pm Field 2	2	9	14
WED 6/16 6:00pm Field 1	11	1	5
6:00pm Field 2	12	15	4
7:15pm Field 1	11	5	1
7:15pm Field 2	12	4	15
WEEK 3	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 6/21 6:00pm Field 1	13	3	9
6:00pm Field 2	7	14	6
7:15pm Field 1	13	9	3
7:15pm Field 2	6	14	7
TUES 6/22 6:00pm Field 1	15	13	11
6:00pm Field 2	4	1	14
7:15pm Field 1	15	11	13
7:15pm Field 2	14	1	4
WED 6/23 6:00pm Field 1	2	8	12
6:00pm Field 2	10	3	5
7:15pm Field 1	2	12	8
7:15pm Field 2	5	3	10
WEEK 4	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 6/28 6:00pm Field 1	5	15	1
6:00pm Field 2	10	4	14
7:15pm Field 1	5	1	15
7:15pm Field 2	14	4	10
TUES 6/29 6:00pm Field 1	6	13	12
6:00pm Field 2	9	7	2
7:15pm Field 1	6	12	13
7:15pm Field 2	2	7	9
WED 6/30 6:00pm Field 1	8	7	11
6:00pm Field 2	3	9	6
7:15pm Field 1	8	11	7
7:15pm Field 2	9	6	3

WEEK 5	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 7/5 6:00pm Field 1	NO GAMES		
6:00pm Field 2	NO GAMES		
7:15pm Field 1	NO GAMES		
7:15pm Field 2	NO GAMES		
TUES 7/6 6:00pm Field 1	12	11	10
6:00pm Field 2	6	7	5
7:15pm Field 1	5	6	12
7:15pm Field 2	10	7	11
WED 7/7 6:00pm Field 1	8	5	4
6:00pm Field 2	9	10	13
7:15pm Field 1	8	4	5
7:15pm Field 2	14	13	10
WEEK 6	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 7/12 6:00pm Field 1	5	7	10
6:00pm Field 2	6	1	4
7:15pm Field 1	5	10	7
7:15pm Field 2	6	4	1
TUES 7/13 6:00pm Field 1	3	8	15
6:00pm Field 2	4	9	2
7:15pm Field 1	3	15	8
7:15pm Field 2	4	2	9
WED 7/14 6:00pm Field 1	1	12	13
6:00pm Field 2	2	11	14
7:15pm Field 1	1	13	12
7:15pm Field 2	2	14	11
WEEK 7	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 7/19 6:00pm Field 1	11	6	4
6:00pm Field 2	13	12	7
7:15pm Field 1	11	4	6
7:15pm Field 2	7	12	13
TUES 7/20 6:00pm Field 1	7	1	8
6:00pm Field 2	14	15	9
7:15pm Field 1	7	15	1
7:15pm Field 2	9	8	14
WED 7/21 6:00pm Field 1	9	5	2
6:00pm Field 2	14	10	13
7:15pm Field 1	3	2	5
7:15pm Field 2	13	10	14
WEEK 8	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 7/26 6:00pm Field 1	10	15	6
6:00pm Field 2	9	11	7
7:15pm Field 1	10	6	15
7:15pm Field 2	7	11	9
TUES 7/27 6:00pm Field 1	12	10	5
6:00pm Field 2	13	2	8
7:15pm Field 1	12	5	10
7:15pm Field 2	13	8	2
WED 7/28 6:00pm Field 1	15	4	1
6:00pm Field 2	11	14	3
7:15pm Field 1	15	1	4
7:15pm Field 2	3	14	11

WEEK 9	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 8/2 6:00pm Field 1	1	10	3
6:00pm Field 2	9	15	8
7:15pm Field 1	1	3	10
7:15pm Field 2	15	8	9
TUES 8/3 6:00pm Field 1	11	13	5
6:00pm Field 2	12	14	7
7:15pm Field 1	13	5	11
7:15pm Field 2	7	14	12
WED 8/4 6:00pm Field 1	1	2	15
6:00pm Field 2	4	3	6
7:15pm Field 1	15	2	1
7:15pm Field 2	6	3	4
WEEK 10	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 8/9 6:00pm Field 1	12	9	1
6:00pm Field 2	8	14	7
7:15pm Field 1	1	5	12
7:15pm Field 2	8	7	14
TUES 8/10 6:00pm Field 1	2	4	13
6:00pm Field 2	6	10	3
7:15pm Field 1	13	15	2
7:15pm Field 2	3	11	6
WED 8/11 6:00pm Field 1	RAIN MAKEUP		
6:00pm Field 2	RAIN MAKEUP		
7:15pm Field 1	RAIN MAKEUP		
7:15pm Field 2	RAIN MAKEUP		
WEEK 11	HOME	AWAY	SK
MON 8/16 6:00pm Field 1	6	2	10
6:00pm Field 2	14	8	4
7:15pm Field 1	10	12	6
7:15pm Field 2	4	1	14
TUES 8/17 6:00pm Field 1	11	15	9
6:00pm Field 2	3	13	5
7:15pm Field 1	9	5	11
7:15pm Field 2	RAIN MAKEUP		
WED 8/18 6:00pm Field 1	RAIN MAKEUP		
6:00pm Field 2	RAIN MAKEUP		
7:15pm Field 1	RAIN MAKEUP		
7:15pm Field 2	RAIN MAKEUP		
Tournament TBD August 27-29			

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Weekenders Guide: Missoula

How to maximize a getaway to Montana's city on the river

BY BELLA BUTLER

MISSOULA – In the western part of Montana, where the lofty lodgepole pines bow to the ponderosas and three rushing rivers spill into conjoined valleys, a man with waist-length hair plucks at the strings of a bass on a curbside. The throbbing notes reverberate down the busy street, checkerboarded with both historic and brand-new buildings. Several people whiz by on bikes and others clink glasses on buzzing outdoor patios. This is a summer day in downtown Missoula.

After growing up in Big Sky, Missoula was the first place I lived long-term. I quickly learned how hard it is to describe the city of Missoula in the context of Montana, yet at the same time how impossible it is to talk about the city apart from its host state. In many ways, Missoula is somewhat of Montana's black sheep: not only is it an intensely liberal pocket in a notoriously red state, but it also embodies more of an urban culture than most of its rural surroundings.

On the other hand, Missoula's identity is deeply intertwined with the stunning northwestern landscape it is nestled within, and though it's one of Montana's largest cities with a population of about 80,000,



Brew Tour

If there were ever a place to do a brew tour, Missoula is it. Of Montana's more than 40 breweries, many have Missoula addresses. Whether you're taking the Thirst Gear, a 15-passenger bike-like brew crawler, or traveling between taps on foot, tasting the malty flavor of the city is a recommended way to spend at least an afternoon in Missoula. It's hard to choose only a few, but an enjoyable route that takes you through the eclectic Hip Strip, downtown

and the beloved North Side is a good place to begin. Start your tour at GILD, a three-story brewery that has a taproom floor, lounge floor and a level of vintage arcade games. Make your way across the Clark Fork River on the Higgins Street bridge the Cranky Sam Public House, a taproom and brewery with a social patio and unique history. Take note of the 1930s mural inside, which was uncovered during the building's renovations. End your journey at Draught Works and sip one of their flagships or something new on another great patio. Food trucks like Missoula's Empanada Joint are often parked here, so save room for something good.



First Friday

If you're lucky enough to hit Missoula on the first Friday of the month, you'll have the option to enjoy First Friday, a favorite Missoula tradition. In the evening, downtown art galleries and businesses open their doors to passersby and offer music, drinks and good conversation. First Friday is perhaps

one of the greatest expressions of Missoula's culture; it is welcoming, energetic and full of art.



River Float

The city of Missoula has in many ways been shaped by the rivers that run through it. During the hot summer months, when the runoff subsides to slower waters, floating the river is a popular way to spend a Saturday. If you're looking for a relaxing booze cruise, start at the Sha-Ron put-in in East Missoula and enjoy a quick 3.6-mile

float into town. If you're looking for a full-day venture with a little more excitement, take your raft to the Blackfoot or Lochsa rivers, but take

chance encounters with friends and neighbors are about as predictable as microbreweries on every block. Within a few months of my residency, I came to understand that socially, Missoula doesn't feel all that disparate from my hometown of 3,000.

The city is widely known for its vibrant and sonorous culture; a hub for music and art in a region that forever was skipped over by flashy headliners (Missoula marquis were advertising big names long before Bozeman's Rialto hosted G-Love or Steve Martin's band agreed to play in Big Sky). And still, at rowdy events like August's annual River City Roots Festival downtown, people still don scratches on their calves from a day of pedaling through the region's many trails, and sandal tans from a float down the Blackfoot River.

Missoula is the epitomal intersection of a lifestyle rooted in both the outdoors and the city.

While Missoula is a great place to live, it also makes for one hell of a weekend. Here's a handful of ways to spend a 48-hour trip in Montana's Garden City.

note of sections that require more skill and experience. If you're a surfer or kayaker, check out Brennan's Wave next to Caras Park and show off your tricks to the gawkers from the park's balcony. Whatever your poison, Trailhead, a local gear shop, is a great place to pick up float routes and tips as well as any necessary equipment.



Catch a Show

In a world where COVID-19 precautions are winding down, the many music venues in Missoula are beginning to reintroduce fans to live shows. From the smaller and historic Wilma downtown to KettleHouse Amphitheater along the Blackfoot River, the venues are often as enjoyable as the acts. Many people, especially from within

Montana, plan a Missoula visit around when their favorite artists are performing—just make sure to buy your tickets far in advance. Some summer shows, like two of three Brandi Carlisle performances, are already sold out.



Take a Hike

Missoula trails are unique from others in southwest Montana. A different climate and location along the Continental Divide provide for unique vegetation like massive Cedar trees and even some patches of rainforest in the southwestern part of the Bitterroot Mountains. If you're sticking around town, Waterworks is a great place to find a network of shorter trails that

overlook the city, and the popular trails up Mount Jumbo and Mount Sentinel lead to classic Missoula vistas.



Farmers Market

Missoula and the surrounding region are blessed with rich agricultural land thanks to the many rivers that bleed fertility into the flanking soils. This part of the area's identity is presented in its best form at the Clark Fork Market near the river downtown on Saturdays. Stands offering international cuisine, flower arrangements and other artisan products are intermixed with the colorful produce tables. Even if you're just walking through, this is a stop worth making.

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Planning with pride pg. 34Music in the Mountains'
triumphant return pg. 38

From barley to beer pg. 40



Making it in Big Sky: JP Woolies

BY GABRIELLE GASSER

BIG SKY – JP Woolies has long been a fixture in Big Sky's retail scene. Longtime local and now Bozeman resident Jacquie Poisson-Love started the store in 1984 and at first only sold knit hats she made herself, which she called "JP Woolies Hats."

Over the next 21 years, Poisson-Love moved from her small space upstairs in the Mountain Mall, what is now The Exchange, at Big Sky Resort to the larger, current location across from Big Sky Sports on the ground floor. She grew the shop from wool hats to a full-blown gift shop, offering items for everyone, as she said, "From 8 months to 80 years, we got you covered."

In 2005, brothers Drew and Tucker Vanyo entered the picture and purchased JP Woolies from Poisson-Love. "When we bought the shop, it already had an awesome array of items and we have tried to carry on with a similar feel over the past 16 years," the Vanyos said.

Now, JP Woolies has five full-time employees including Drew's wife, Jennifer, who came on board as a partner in the shop.



Drew and Tucker Vanyo purchased JP Woolies from its original owner Jacquie Poisson-Love in 2005. Now the gift shop has five full time employees and offers a wide selection of toys, clothing, art and jewelry among many other things. PHOTO COURTESY OF DREW VANYO

permanently. Soon after moving to Big Sky, our parents met the original owner of JP Woolies, Jacquie Poisson-Love. Jacquie was ready for another adventure in her life and was looking to sell the gift shop. Our parents encouraged us to look at her business and with the guidance of our parents, we purchased JP Woolies in November of 2005.

EBS: Tell me about the products you carry?

D.V.: We offer a large array of items. We are a gift shop located at the base of Montana's best ski resort, so we try to combine souvenir items with locally made and resourced gifts. We have pottery, artwork and jewelry that is made by different local artisans. We have a large display of t-shirts, hoodies and pajamas. Our toy section has items for local kids as well as families on vacation. Montana sapphires are our best-selling jewelry line, but we have over 20 different jewelers that make jewelry for JP Woolies. Souvenir staples as well; shot glasses, stickers, coffee mugs, etc.

EBS: What is your favorite product in the store?

D.V.: Our favorite items would be our 3-D puzzles that are carved by Peter Chapman from Virginia. The puzzles, which are actually wood carvings, come in a variety of different animals, from moose and bear to dragons and giraffes. Each piece is handmade from one piece of wood and Peter hides a treasure inside each animal. It is a puzzle but also a piece of artwork.

EBS: Do you often partner with local artists?

D.V.: We partner with as many local artists as possible. We have photos from Ryan Turner Photography and Mike Haring; we have antler chews from Big Sky Antler; Pottery from Lulu Pottery, Firehole Pottery and Mountain Arts Pottery; Jewelry from Mac's Gems, Studio Montana, and Cool Water Jewelry; beauty products from Windrift Hill and Mineral Springs, both Montana made. We also have home décor items by My Home in Montana which are made over in Ennis.

EBS: What is your favorite part of working at JP Woolies?

D.V.: Our favorite parts of working at JP Woolies are, first and foremost, the happy guests we get to talk to on a regular basis. Almost everyone coming to Big Sky is on vacation, so they are typically in good moods and really enjoying the place we call home. Talking with these folks can easily bring a smile to our faces. The second-best part is its proximity to the chairlift. It is fun and easy to get a quick ski break during the winter since we are only 100 yards from Swift Current.

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

D.V.: The best business advice we have ever received would be: For a business to be successful, the owner must be present and engaged. It is much easier to ask a coworker to perform a task when their boss is doing the same work. Also, customers appreciate the presence of an owner.

“For a business to be successful,
the owner must be present
and engaged.”

Explore Big Sky sat down with the Vanyos to learn more about their business and all of the great products they carry. Their answers are below.

Some answers below have been edited for brevity.

Explore Big Sky: How did you both become involved with JP Woolies?

Drew Vanyo: Tucker and I grew up in Somerset, Pennsylvania. I came to Montana State University for my freshman year, but ended up transferring to Clemson University, where I graduated [with] a degree in marketing. While I was attending Clemson, I would take the spring semester off and worked three winters as a cook at Buck's T-4 Lodge. During that period, Tucker was attending Virginia Tech, where he graduated with a degree in finance, and would come to Big Sky each spring break. When we graduated from college, we both moved to Big Sky

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Enjoying the Ride: Planning with pride



BY SCOTT BROWN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Around the world, June is recognized as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) Pride Month to commemorate a tipping point in LGBTQ+ history. The Stonewall Uprising occurred in June of 1969 in Manhattan, New York and lasted six days as police clashed with LGBTQ+ protesters. More recently, on June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court's Obergefell v. Hodges

decision granted Americans universal marriage rights, and on June 15, 2020, the Supreme Court granted equal employment protections to the gay and transgender community. So obviously, June is a special month for our LGBTQ+ family, friends and fellow citizens!

Unfortunately, the recent favorable decisions have not eliminated all the financial planning complications for LGBTQ+ couples. For example, while there are now certain protections at the federal level, there are still many states that have not equalized benefits or put in place anti-discrimination laws that affect health care, housing and access to credit. There are also different rules across America about parental rights, adoption and other family financial planning options.

On top of that, more LGBTQ+ Americans are approaching retirement. By 2030, there will be an estimated 6 million LGBTQ+ seniors in the U.S. and, like any other couple, financial and estate planning are essential to ensure this expanding community is happy, healthy and financially prepared to enjoy the years to come.

Unmarried LGBTQ+ couples should consider a living will or medical directives. Those who have not legally married will not be afforded "next-of-kin" status for each other, and in the instance of a medical emergency may even be treated as legal strangers. If you are incapacitated, that could mean your significant other would be bypassed at the hospital and a relative would be called instead. For financial matters, a partner would not be able to step in immediately and handle your money in the case of an emergency without a court order if they do not have a properly executed Power of Attorney.

Of course, a will is critical. The absence of such a document may trigger your state's "default" distribution plan, which usually directs the assets to a legal spouse or, if none exists, to your blood heirs. Thus, a will is especially important if you are unmarried and have a personal residence that you wish for your partner to continue living in after your death, or if you have assets with no assignable beneficiary that you want to leave to a partner.

Putting assets into a trust can help heirs avoid probate and more specifically address personal and death tax issues. Beneficiary designations on certain assets (such as life insurance, retirement accounts, etc.) take precedence over wills or other instructions. That's why it's so important to review these beneficiary designations carefully. Always ensure to title to your assets properly. For example, a house titled "Joint Tenants with Rights of Survivorship" will pass directly to the surviving owner when an owner dies, rather than through your will.

Child custody issues are important to plan for as state laws vary greatly with respect to the parenting rights of LGBTQ+ couples and access to services. Some states may require additional adoption procedures if one parent is a biological parent to a child but the other isn't. Finally, domestic partnership or cohabitation agreements and separation plans may help outline financial expectations during the partnership as well as how assets are divided if the relationship ends.

Some advantages of being married include avoiding the so-called "marriage tax penalty" where couples filing jointly paid more than singles at certain higher income levels. Gifts of more than \$15,000 annually to non-spouses eat into the giver's lifetime federal gift and estate tax exclusion, whereas married couples can make unlimited gifts to each other. Also, married couples are guaranteed Social Security spousal and survivor benefits, which also apply if you get divorced after at least 10 years of marriage. Legal spouses may be covered by their spouse's employer's health plan and other health benefits like HAS accounts and childcare.

Retirement savings accounts like 401(k) plans require the spouse to be the beneficiary unless they give written consent to designate someone else. An inheriting spouse can roll over inherited assets to their own IRA and defer required minimum distributions until they are 72 years old. Generally, under the SECURE Act, a non-spouse inheriting an IRA must withdraw the entire balance within 10 years of the IRA owner's death.

LGBTQ+ spouses of military members may be some of the greatest financial beneficiaries of marriage equality, because a legal spouse is eligible for a wide range of military benefits, from pension survivor benefits to health care to housing. Perhaps the most financially impactful change, however, is the estate planning ease with which same sex married couples can now transfer assets to each other without incurring taxes.

Regardless of your lifestyle decisions, race, religion or socioeconomic position, to protect your loved ones and safeguard your finances, it's best to put a plan in place that specifies your wishes and designates the people you trust to carry them out. You should always consult professionals in the legal, accounting and finance fields to assist and advise you with your plans. Summer has arrived in southwest Montana so get outside and enjoy the ride!

Scott L. Brown is the Co-Founder and Managing Principal of Shore to Summit Wealth Management. His wealth management career spans more than 25 years and he currently works and lives in Bozeman, Montana, with his wife and two sons.

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BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, June 18 – Thursday, July 1

If your event falls between July 2 and July 15, please submit it by June 9 by emailing media@outlaw.partners

Friday, June 18

Total Archery Challenge

Big Sky Resort, 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

F.A.C. (Friday Afternoon Club)

EBS Facebook Live &
Live music from Blue Buddha, 5 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: Peter King

Tips Up, 10 p.m.

Saturday, June 19

Saturday Sweat

Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Sunday, June 20

108 Sun Salutations to Greet Summer

Wilson Plaza, 9:30 a.m.

Monday, June 21

Trivia Night

Pinky G's Pizzeria, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 22

Bozeman Farmers' Market

Lindley Park, 5 p.m.

Black Diamond Business Awards Dinner

Big Sky Resort, 5 p.m.

Trivia Night

Café 191, 5:30 p.m.

Trivia Night

ACRE Kitchen, 6 – 8 p.m.

Wednesday, June 23

Big Sky Farmers Market

Town Center, 5 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: Madeline Hawthorne

Tips Up, 8 p.m.

Thursday, June 24

Wildflower and Weed Hike

Deer Creek Trailhead, 10 a.m.

Derma Rolling Course

Santosh Wellness Center, 6 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: Dammit Lauren!

Tips Up, 10 p.m.

Friday, June 25

F.A.C. (Friday Afternoon Club)

EBS Facebook Live &
Live music from Blue Buddha, 5 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: KC 'n Bo

Tips Up, 10 p.m.

Saturday, June 26

Saturday Sweat

Moving Mountains, 8 a.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: Scavenger

Tips Up, 10 p.m.

Sunday, June 27

GVL Discover Walk

M Trailhead, Bozeman, 9 a.m.

Used Book Sale

Bozeman Public Library, 10 a.m.

Monday, June 28

Trivia Night

Pinky G's Pizzeria, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 29

Plein Air Painting with Patrick McClellan

Porcupine Creek Area, 10 a.m., Get tickets at:
eventgroove.com/event/Learn-The-Joy-Of-Plein-Air-Painting-With-Patrick-49890

Bozeman Farmers' Market

Lindley Park, 5 p.m.

Trivia Night

Café 191, 5:30 p.m.

Trivia Night

ACRE Kitchen, 6 – 8 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 30

Plein Air Painting with Patrick McClellan

Porcupine Creek Area, 10 a.m., Get tickets at:
eventgroove.com/event/Learn-The-Joy-Of-Plein-Air-Painting-With-Patrick-49890

Big Sky Farmers Market

Town Center, 5 p.m.

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: The Damn Duo

Tips Up, 8 p.m.

Thursday, July 1

Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo

175 Oldroyd Rd., 7 p.m.

Live Music: Willie Waldman Project

Tips Up, 10 p.m.

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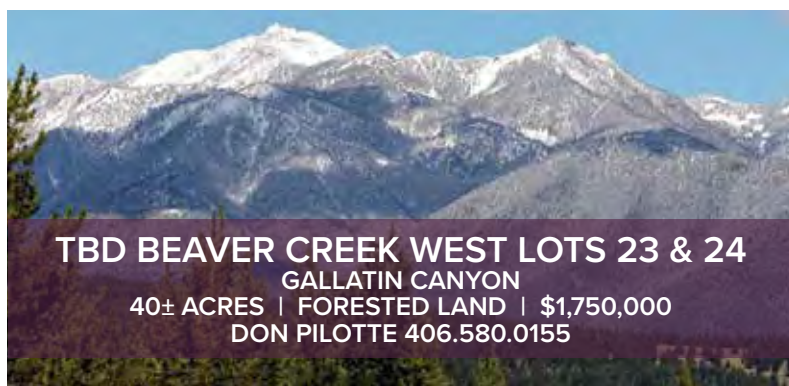
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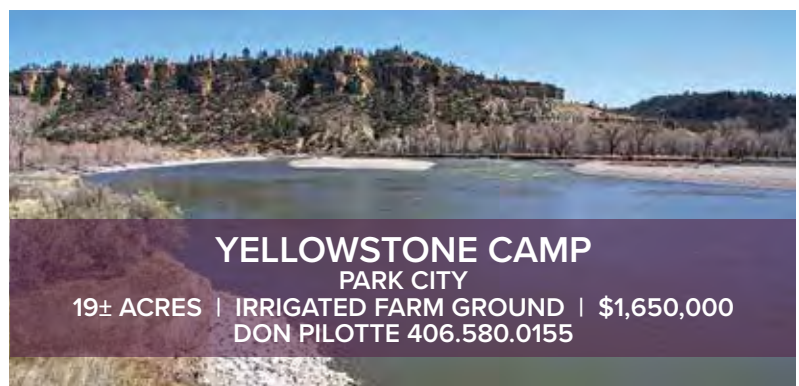


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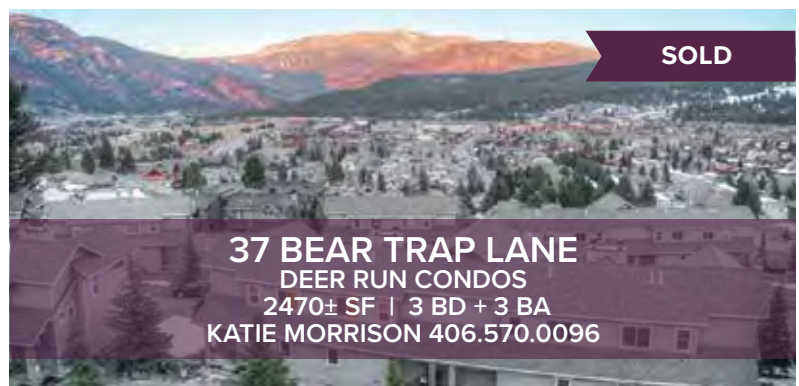
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BIG SKY TOWN CENTER

Music in the Mountains' triumphant return

Community's beloved music series announces star-studded lineup

BY MIRA BRODY

BIG SKY – Tips Up in Big Sky Town Center buzzed with energy on the night of June 10. It was the Arts Council of Big Sky's Music in the Mountains lineup release party, and the scene was a vastly different energy than last year, when the music scene, across Big Sky and the world, was silenced by the pandemic.

Music in the Mountains, the community's beloved free concert series, now in its 13th year running, will return this summer. The Arts Council announced this summer's diverse and star-studded lineup alongside a performance by local Grateful Dead cover band Dead Sky.

"It's hard to believe that it's been two years since we've had Music in the Mountains—everybody knows Music in the Mountains, right?" Brian Hurlbut, the Arts Council's executive director, asked a crowd of boisterous fans.

Last year, the series went virtual with the help of the stage and technology of the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center. Although an impressive production, it just "wasn't as cool as live music," says Hurlbut. Indeed, much of the show's energy comes from visiting with your friends, family and locale and enjoying local food vendors in the park.

This year, the series will kick off on July 3 and 4 for Fourth of July weekend in the Wilson Plaza pending the completion of the weekly event's regular stage area in Len Hill Park in Big Sky Town Center.

Hurlbut says they hope to move to the park by their July 15 show. Steep Canyon Rangers, the band comedian Steve Martin famously plays banjo for, will kick off the July 3 show, and the Tiny Band will bring in the Fourth of July fireworks show.

Before reintroducing Dead Sky back on stage following the lively lineup announcement, Hurlbut gave a nod to Joe Knapp, one of the group's former bandmates, who passed away suddenly in May.

"We've had Dead Sky for Music in the Mountains and it just seemed like the right thing to do to bring these guys back," said Hurlbut.

Music in the Mountains will run every Thursday, with the exception of weekend shows for Fourth of July weekend, Big Sky PBR weekend and the Bravo! Big Sky Music Festival weekend, starting at 6 p.m. The free, family-friendly concert series is made possible by generous sponsors, including: High Altitude Property Management, The Cave Spirits and Gifts, Conoco, Big Sky Build, Big Sky Vacation Rentals, Big Sky Landscaping, Suffolk Construction, Mia Lennon of Big Sky Real Estate and Ace Hardware.

"It's a big relief," Hurlbut told EBS in an interview. "I think, like many people in the community, the staff and board of the Arts Council ... we really missed having it last summer. The series is a great way for us to be in front of the community, to showcase what we do, and I think it's what we do best."



Dead Sky, a local Grateful Dead cover band, played at Tips Up in the Big Sky Town Center for the summer 2021 Music in the Mountains lineup release party. PHOTO BY GABRIELLE GASSER

MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS SUMMER 2021 LINEUP

- July 3—Steep Canyon Rangers
- July 4—Tiny Band
- July 8—Dusty Pockets
- July 15—Sneaky Pete and the Secret Weapons (First show in the park)
- July 22—Magnolia Boulevard (Big Sky PRB weekend)
- July 29—Toubab Krewe
- Aug. 5—John Roberts y Pan Blanco
- Aug. 12—Dammit Lauren

BRAVO! BIG SKY AT THE WARREN MILLER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

- Aug. 13—Angella Ahn and Friends
- Aug. 14—Futureman/Silverman
- Aug. 19—Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs
- Aug. 26—Erica Falls
- Sept. 2—The Waiting
- Sept. 9—Pinky and the Floyd



Artist Spotlight: Averi Iris

Young Bozeman artist receives recognition for painting her passion

BY JULIA BARTON

BOZEMAN – Montana-raised artist Averi Iris Smith takes inspiration from natural surroundings, turning local landscapes and wildlife into colorful paintings. Initially from Missoula, Smith is a sophomore at Gallatin High School in Bozeman, finding time between her studies and three sports to paint the things she loves.

Smith took to art from a young age, drawing at first with her grandfather, and moving to paints at the age of 10. Now 16, the young artist fell in love with acrylic, painting realistic portraiture of animals that her mother, Jill Smith, would show off to her friends. This led to a series of pet commissions and, most notably, a large bison painting that required the use of colorful paints. Upon finishing, Smith couldn't stay away from the brightly colored paints she had utilized in the piece, and began incorporating them into her work ever since.

To allow herself maximum creative freedom, especially as a high school student, Iris no longer does commissions, Jill explained. Rather, she paints what she is passionate about, and at her own pace—many of her paintings take multiple days to finish.

Inspiration for Smith's artwork comes from all over Montana.

"I like to paint the closer places, the ones that feel like home," Smith said,



PHOTO COURTESY OF JILL SMITH

reflecting on landscape pieces she has done, featuring Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks as well as the Bridger Range. Even the colors she uses are often inspired by Montana sunsets and vistas, Smith said.

The painter finds influence in both subject and technique through the works of other Montana-based artists including Julie T. Chapman, Colt Idol and Rachel Pohl. After finding her start in acrylic paints, Smith saw a gallery showing of oil paintings and began experimenting with the medium in more abstract pieces. Now, a combination of acrylic and oil paintings make up Smith's body of work.

For a piece she is working on for the Whitefish Art Show, Iris is exploring integrating gold leaf, a thin gold paper, into a painting of a bison.

"It's amazing, I'm so glad that I get to do this as my job," said Smith.

Despite balancing her time between the soccer field, basketball and tennis courts, and the classroom, Smith always makes time to create art that can be seen all over the state. Smith won the 2020 Sweet Pea Festival poster contest, has work displayed in the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport and is Sage Lodge's featured artist.

This summer, you can find her art at the Whitefish Arts Festival, the Big Sky Art Auction and SLAM fest. She also sells art and houses her portfolio on her website, averiirisart.com.

Musician Spotlight: Matt Miller

Bozeman-based country artist returns to stage with pandemic inspiration

BY JULIA BARTON

BOZEMAN – Although country musician Matt Miller moved from Oklahoma to Montana nearly 30 years ago in pursuit of the outdoor ventures the Northern Rockies have to offer, he ultimately found solace in the humble music scene in Bozeman. Following the silencing of live music during the pandemic, Miller is excited to share the creativity he found in isolation with local crowds.

Miller found his way to music while learning the guitar at 13, and a few years later began experimenting with songwriting. His first attempts, Miller admitted, were "terrible," but as he grew, so did his talent. By 2013, he was singing and playing guitar at open mic nights and small venues in Bozeman, and he hasn't stopped since.

When the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the lives of those across the world, many musicians were hit particularly hard as social gatherings, including concerts or live music showings, came to a grueling halt. Miller was lucky enough, he said, to not be entirely financially dependent on music to get him through. Although Miller missed the live shows, isolation provided him the creativity to write some of what he believes are his best songs.

"It's rare to get that much time to yourself," Miller said, emphasizing the



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATT MILLER.

role personal reflection has on his process. "No matter what you do ... it's hard to get that time to focus on what you like and turn that into a creative outlet."

Miller expressed he often finds inspiration by watching what other people were going through. A fail-safe method, he explained, is walking into a bar alone and simply studying how people are acting, and then make it into a story to write about.

"Especially in country music, it's all about storytelling," he said. These bite-sized stories fit well into Miller's lyrics, covering motifs of love, loss and everything in between.

As live music picks back up, the musician is reflecting on the growth Bozeman has seen during his time performing in the area. Miller is

happy to see old faces who have been supportive of live music for years and recognizes new crowds appearing to live shows more often, too.

"We're really just scratching the surface as far as the music scene here," Miller said.

Miller is looking forward to playing for live audiences all summer in the Bozeman area. You can hear Miller's music live from a number of Montana venues this summer, including Stacey's Bar & Steakhouse, the Old Saloon, Bozeman Taproom and Nordic Brew Works.

From barley to beer

MSU Malt Lab provides important malt data across the continent

BY MIRA BRODY

BOZEMAN – Since humans have been brewing beer for most of our existence—some experts say beer recipes date back 5,000 years—it’s difficult to imagine civilization without it, and one particular grain is a key component. “We say, ‘no barley, no beer,’” said Hannah Turner, Montana State University’s Barley, Malt & Brewing Quality Lab Director.

Beer’s key ingredient, barley, also plays a huge role in Montana’s agricultural history. Barley and wheat have been staples of the Treasure State for centuries and to this day, Montanans plant more barley than almost any other state in the country. Montana seems to possess a love of craft beer that is akin to their devotion to its main ingredient. The state regularly sits in the top three consumers of craft beer per capita and according to the Montana Brewers Association, there are currently 92 breweries operating in the state, a number that is consistently growing.

Between the volume of barley the state produces and its inhabitants’ love for craft beer, the MSU Barley, Malt & Brewing Quality Lab serves as an integral resource. The lab is an educational and outreach epicenter for growers, maltsters and brewers across the country. In fact, growers and brewers as far north as Canada and as far south as Texas receive data collected by the lab.

It all starts with barley breeding—the process of improving the traits of different breeds of barley through decades of growing and monitoring. The idea is to produce high-quality and consistent barley. While breeding takes between 10 to 12 years, it’s the early stage monitoring that really pays off to attain these goals. When MSU’s barley program director, Jamie Sherman, started in 2015, she had a vision for how the future lab would serve the region and used startup funds provided by MSU to establish the Barley, Malt & Brewing Quality Lab by 2016.

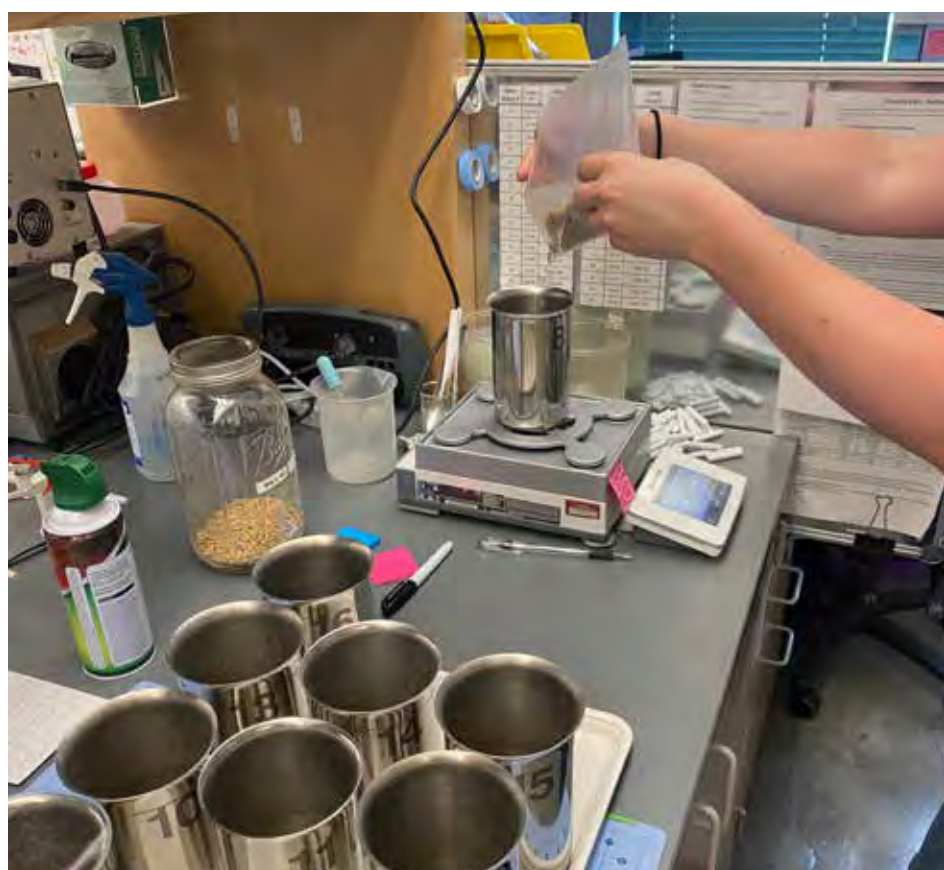
“We’re very unique in that way,” said Turner of the lab’s services. “There weren’t any other public labs that were able to do this so we kind of set an example.”

Although there are other labs working toward supplying the same services MSU’s does, it remains the most robust in the region as far as data and services provided. Data about the barley, which is bred here in the campus’ greenhouses, is collected through a three-stage process: steep, germination and kiln. They get close to fermenting—but without producing alcohol since they aren’t a licensed brewery—but enough to be able to accomplish the research and answer the questions that brewers will need.

All this provides the data necessary to grow viable malts that will produce great malt, which ultimately becomes great beer.

“To me, beer is the end of the spectrum, the consumer is very much the end of the spectrum,” said Turner. “It starts with the greenhouse and the 10 to 12 years of breeding.”

“[The lab is] balancing the levers that they have to create a barley that’s really consistent and meets very specific needs,” Turner continued. “It has to meet certain qualities to be able to be accepted as malting quality. If it doesn’t make that grade, it ends up getting sold for feed and they take a pretty significant pay cut for that.”



The malting process is broken down into three primary steps: steeping germination and kiln. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY



The MSU Malt & Brewing Quality Lab provides education and outreach to brewers across North America. PHOTO BY MIRA BRODY

Currently the lab is working on a new flavor project for the Brewers Association involving 30 malts back to back, taking malted barley and mixing it with water to try and find variations in flavor.

For Montana brewers, the data collected at the lab is not only useful to acquire the best malt for their beer, but also as a way to gain a better understanding of the brews they’ve created in-house, such as a breakdown of sugar, protein and alcohol content. They also collaborate on projects, such as the Pink Boots Society, a nonprofit organization that encourages and supports women all over the U.S. to become successful brewers. Turner got to work alongside local breweries, such as Beehive Basin Brewing, which she said is the best part of her job—the on-site collaboration.

“Getting to go to those collaboration days, you learn so much about what it is that the brewers are doing,” said Turner. “It’s the best feeling in the world when something that I’m doing here makes a difference or helps their process. That’s definitely a huge motivation of learning more about it, so I can make what we do more applicable to what their needs are.”

This summer, the lab will host a Post Farm Field Day on July 8, at which graduate students will showcase a new breeding project about current barley varieties grown in Montana as well as a study that looks at how barley genes impact seed size.

The next time you sip your favorite beer—no matter where you are—be assured that your taste buds are experiencing at least a decade of chemistry experiments.

The malting process at a glance

Malting is taking advantage of the natural germination that barley wants to go through naturally.

1. Steeping: Steeping takes two days, in which the barley grain is taken from 8-12 percent to 42-48 percent moisture. This tricks the barley into thinking it is time to germinate.

2. Germination: During this three to five day germination process, Turner and her crew gather data as it grows. To make good malt, this germination has to be carefully balanced, and it is here that you can determine how a kernel reacts to elements such as drought, disease and much more. This is also the point where the sprout turns the starch in the plant into sugar.

3. Kiln: The kiln is a 24-hour process that slowly dries the barley to make it stable for long-term storage. This creates the “base malt” and preserves all the enzymes that were created in this germination process. Once a brewer is ready to make beer from here, the process picks right back up where it left off and become delicious beer!



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BY SCOTT MECHURA
EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

Beef and cattle have a relationship almost as symbiotic as humans do with corn. Yet, beef still seems to get a bad rap.

There is so much more to cattle than just the black and white four-legged creatures we see on television and milk cartons. So, I thought I would share some facts I find interesting about our bovine friends.

The price of beef actually went down over the period of the Trump Administration by about 30 cents. From a gross carcass weight of \$2.16, down to \$1.84.

A calf weighs between 70-80 pounds at birth and they will be on their feet taking their first steps within two hours. It is at this point that their survival depends on their first mother's milk, called colostrum. This first milk contains double the fat of future milk, packed with fat, vitamins and nutrients. As this milk is consumed, the mother will then produce the milk we are familiar with that comes in cartons.

Cattle have one stomach but it has four separate compartments. They pass hay, grasses and feed back and forth as well as regurgitating this ruminant, called cud, back to where the cow can continue to chew it for up to eight hours a day until it is of satisfactory texture to be permanently digested. This is what's known as chewing their cud.

A cow is a ruminant mammal. Deer, sheep, goats and elk are also ruminants.

A calf is at their mature weight by about 8 months if all goes well. Weights vary, but an adult beef cow weighs on average about 1,500 lbs.

Beef cattle are one of the most efficiently utilized animals—98 percent usage to be exact. It's not just a matter of cutting steaks and burgers and the rest of the animal has no use. About 45 percent of the carcass is used for meat, then the rest has any number of uses, including china, glue, film, gelatin, leather, insulin and soap.

One single cowhide can produce 144 baseballs, 20 footballs, 12 basketballs or one beautiful rug in front of your mountain home fireplace.

We hear a lot about beef cattle, their impact on the planet and their exponential growth. But the reality is that not only have the number of cows and calves decreased since 1055, but since 2001, we have 400,000 fewer beef cattle in the U.S.

So, all these numbers would indicate that we should not be paying more for our beef than we did in years past. On the surface logic would say this doesn't make sense, but the reality is that it is the labor and ability to process our beef cattle that is at the crux of the issue.

We as humans, and particularly Americans, have worked diligently on trying to balance the circle of life, our natural evolutionary tendencies, as well as being sustainably conscious.

But as I've pointed out in previous pieces, science has shown that beef cattle, properly managed on the land, have a positive impact, not a negative one.

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.



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American Life in Poetry

BY KWAME DAWES

In many cultural traditions, an encounter with an owl at night is an ominous sign. But here, in a poem by recent Shelley Memorial Award winner, Arthur Sze, (first published in 1982), there is a wonderful transformation from the purple of dusk to the green of dawn that captures a moment of pure optimism in this strange and decidedly magical nocturnal encounter between the poet and an owl.

The Owl

BY ARTHUR SZE

The path was purple in the dusk.
I saw an owl, perched,
on a branch.

And when the owl stirred, a fine dust
fell from its wings. I was
silent then. And felt

the owl quaver. And at dawn, waking,
the path was green in the
May light.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

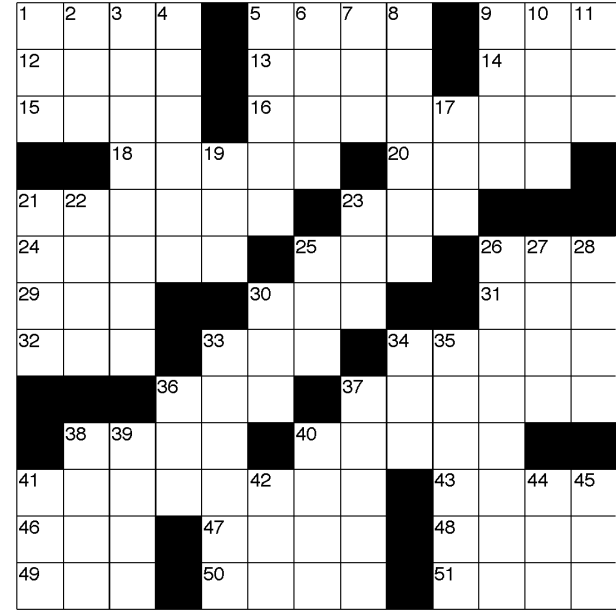
- S. Afr. fox
- World War I battle site
- No middle initial (abbr.)
- Part of a keel
- Fruit
- Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
- Impair
- Black rhinoceros
- Moving part
- Stint
- Planet
- Tar
- Isolated hill
- Cereal spike
- Three (Ital.)
- Compass direction
- Chatter
- Electric reluctance unit
- Energy unit
- Competed
- Azores island
- Large (pref.)
- Islamic month
- Musical instrument (woodwind)
- Physician
- Last (2 words)
- Length (abbr.)
- Sayings (suf.)
- New York canal
- Lower intestine
- Wax (pref.)
- Tanbark
- Air (pref.)

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

F	C	C	G	A	R	O	R	A	B	I
A	C	E	O	B	E	D	O	M	E	N
A	A	R	W	I	N	D	B	O	R	N
U	S	A	R	A	M	A	T			
G	A	L	E	N	D	I	D	Y		
O	B	E	X	O	H	N	E	B	C	E
T	B	A	A	D	O	R	N	A	A	R
H	A	N	D	U	N	E	S	C	A	N
N	A	S	I	L	A	K	M	E		
F	L	A	P	T	A	I	T			
L	I	G	H	T	U	N	I	T	A	A
E	C	T	O	T	A	L	C	L	B	A
T	A	H	R	E	S	T	H	K	A	A

DOWN

- Tree
- Jamaican dance music
- Notched
- Goethe work
- King of Crete
- Per. poet
- National Bureau of Standards (abbr.)
- Beau
- Cella
- Stamp
- John, Gaelic
- Vehicle compartment
- Tuesday (abbr.)
- Above (Ger.)
- Sambar deer
- Talk
- Belonging to (suf.)
- Trigon
- Interpret
- Feminine (suf.)
- Joke
- Fitted garment
- Having (suf.)
- Menotti heroine
- One of the Three Stooges
- Son of Zebedee
- Without (Ger.)
- Wild pig
- Gray (Fr.)
- Skin vesicle
- Mountain (pref.)
- Three (pref.)
- Yellow Sea arm



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Corner Quote

“Life appears to me too short to be spent in nursing animosity or registering wrongs.”

-Charlotte Brontë, “Jane Eyre”

BIG SKY BEATS

“Music in the Mountains”

BY JULIA BARTON

Of everything that we missed out on last summer due to the pandemic, one overwhelming gap seemed to be live music. Thursday nights in Big Sky have been well known for free outdoor concerts for years, and after taking the summer off in 2020, Music in the Mountains is back. Here’s a playlist of songs from this year’s lineup of artists to get you excited for what is to come. To read more about the lineup, head to pg. 38.



- “It Ain’t Me” by Steep Canyon Rangers
- “Always Be My Baby” by The Dusty Pockets
- “Bad Bad Man” by Sneaky Pete & The Secret Weapons
- “Sister” by Magnolia Boulevard
- “Nirvana the Buffalo” by Toubab Krewe
- “Jack Slade” by Dammit Lauren
- “Time or Tears” by Lancy Lou and the Bird Dogs
- “Old Records” by Erica Falls
- “Unfazed” by The Waiting

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BACK 40

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”

Rubber Tramping: #MyHouseHasWheels



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KELSEY DZINTARS

BY EDNOR THERRIALT

My family traveled all over Montana when the kids were still young enough to survive without a Wi-Fi connection, and we always car camped. For this middle-age dad, the activity is in keeping with my personal credo of life, liberty and the pursuit of a comfortable chair.

The car camping I'm talking about here, though, is called rubber tramping, a hobo idiom that means traveling by car or truck and sleeping in your vehicle. After a summer spent crisscrossing the state researching a book project, I learned several valuable lessons about rubber tramping—many the hard way—and I'd like to share my acquired wisdom of this intriguing, potentially delightful camping alternative.

Here's a little background: I decided to give rubber tramping a try after a few nights of “regular camping,” arriving at some far-flung campground after dark and trying to set up my tent by light of headlamp. I'd emerge in the morning to find several neighbors gathered around my tent, gawking at what they thought must be a hang glider crash. After a couple of these episodes, the idea of pulling into a spot, setting the emergency brake and going right to sleep sounded pretty attractive. Of course, there's a bit more to it than that.

First, you have to be self-contained. Some things, like food and drink, are obvious. I keep a small cooler stocked with lunchmeat and cheese (and a few adult beverages) in case I get off the road too late to sample the local fare. A box of tightly sealed canned meals and dry goods like bread and crackers are a must, but make sure the lids seal tightly; field mice will breach your vehicle through an opening as small as a dime and you can kiss your Annie's Cheddar Squares goodbye.

The beauty of being self-contained is that you can sleep anywhere you can park your rig, within reason. It can be tricky finding a hassle-proof spot in a town, though, and it's crucial that you think it through—what will the scene be tomorrow morning? You don't want to wake up in the middle of a bustling farmers market, for instance. Church parking lots are usually a safe bet, but in an unfamiliar area I stick to campgrounds.

Whether you find a Forest Service site or a glitzy KOA, it's important to get an overview before you set that parking brake. Take the time to drive slowly through the entire campground and note the various inhabitants. You'll see the newbies, typically young couples or loud families who failed to bring essentials like insect repellent, matches or food. Then there are the homesteaders, who tend to push boundaries of the 14-day limit. Their RVs sport large awnings festooned with Christmas lights, shading the propane grill and patio furniture that's arranged on an indoor-outdoor carpet. They've installed a horseshoe pit. A mailbox post is pounded into the dirt out front.

Once you've gotten the lay of the land, it's time to choose your home for the night. In my experience, the closer you can get to the bathroom, the better. I had this in mind last summer when I camped at a place disturbingly named Deadman's Basin Reservoir in central Montana. Navigating my little RAV4 along the muddy campground road, I chose a low spot among the trees right near the shore. On a nearby hill I spotted a stone outhouse, occasionally silhouetted by lightning like an old mansion in a horror movie.

As a downpour drummed on the Toyota's roof, I flattened the back seats and managed to stack all my gear on one side, creating just enough room for myself along the floor. I'd brought a new single size air mattress, but soon discovered that meant single bed, not single human body. I scrambled around like a chimp in a space capsule, knocking over stacks of gear, trying to make room for the mattress as it expanded. Once it was inflated, I crawled into my sleeping bag and stretched out on the mattress, which immediately bent into a U-shape and folded up around me. I slept fitfully, dreaming I was a chalupa.

Before my next excursion, I swapped the RAV4 for a Honda Element, which looks like a Soviet-era ice cream truck and was initially marketed to 20-somethings who go boogie boarding and mountain biking and say things like, “What's a phone booth?”

Surprisingly, this strange-looking vehicle was instead embraced by baby boomers who go antiquing and do plein air painting and say things like, “Honey, did you iron my good jeans for the Eagles concert?” It's also

perfect for rubber tramping. The back seats can be removed, opening up a cavernous space with a floor as flat as a pool table. Although the Element has all-wheel drive, with roughly the same ground clearance as a vacuum cleaner it isn't considered an off-road vehicle.

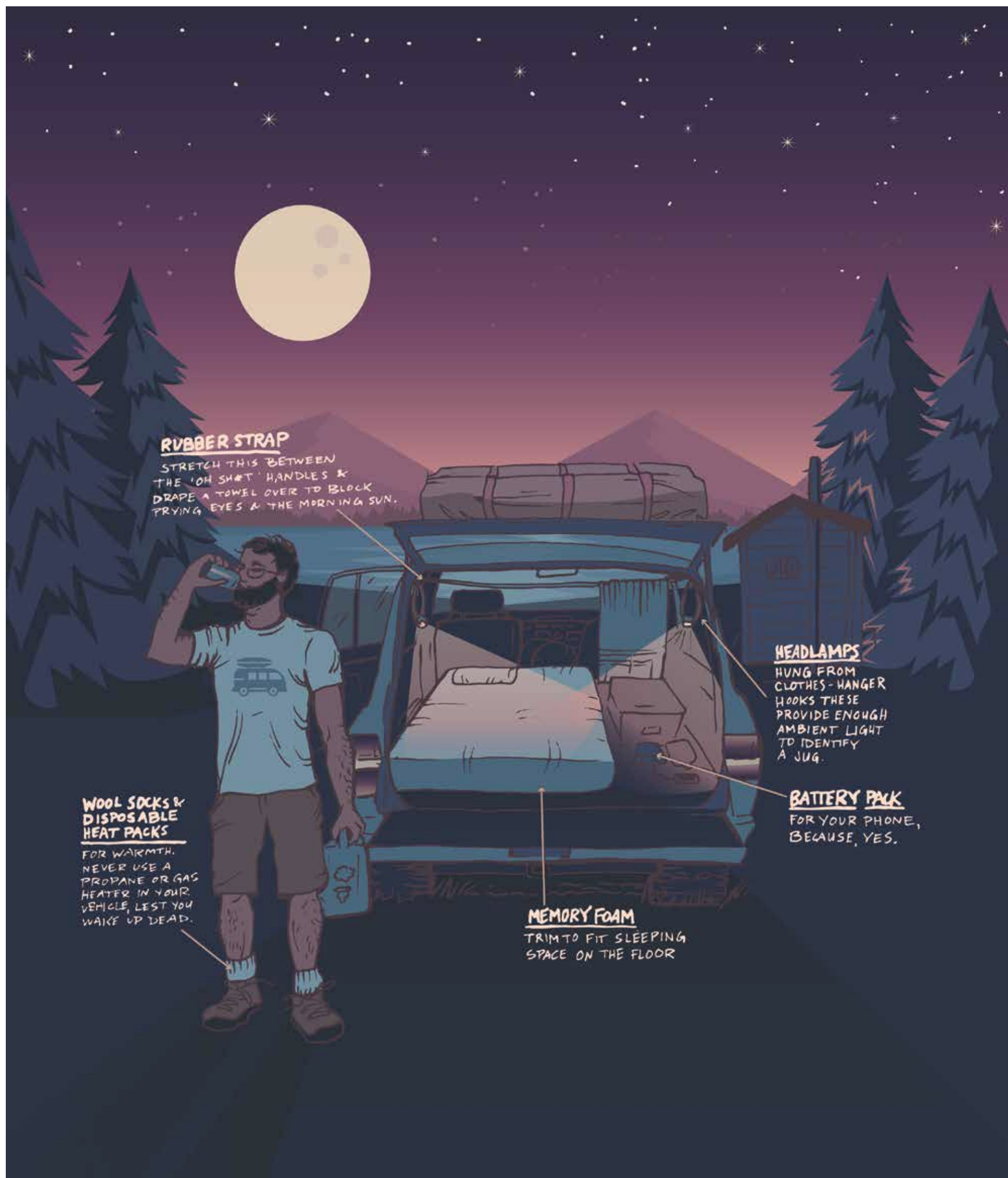
At the James Kipp Recreation Area campground on the Missouri River, I found a spot among the fifth-wheel campers, bus-sized RVs and herds of ATVs. I'd never seen so much camouflage in my life. I don't know what all those people were up to, but they sure didn't want anyone seeing them do it. There was a water pump near the outhouse (in retrospect, a big red flag), so I decided to fill my water jug. What came out of the spout looked like that fluid that squirts out of a brown mustard bottle before

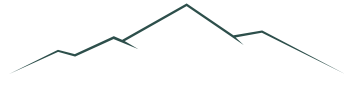
the brown mustard comes out. The campground host wandered by and saw my look of horror. "It's drinkable," he said. "It's been tested." Oh, it's been tested, I thought.

Later that night I woke up in the pitch-black confines of the Element, and grabbed an empty jug rather than digging for my shoes to exit the car. In the morning, things became complicated...

Here's one last priceless piece of advice for rubber tramping: Make sure your water bottle and your pee bottle are two completely different sizes and shapes. Let's just leave it at that, shall we?

A version of this story was first published in the Summer 2019 edition of Mountain Outlaw magazine.





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