

Big Sky celebrates kindness

Penny for Housing' moves forward

Lady Big Horns' hoops team on a roll

Spotlight:Big Sky Big Grass locals

Plus: Winter Real Estate Guide

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ON THE COVER:

Ophir Elementary and Middle School students, staff and faculty get in the spirit of "riding the wave to kindness" on Jan. 30 at the Hawaiian-themed kick-off pep rally for the five-day global anti-bullying campaign, The Great Kindness Challenge. PHOTO BY WES OVERVOLD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: News

Dpinion .ocal Montana	10
Section 2: Environment, Sports & Health	
nvironment	17
Sports	2
lealth	2

Section 3: Outdoors, Gear, Fun

Outdoors	
Gear	
Fun	
Back 40	48

Section 4: Events & Entertainment..... .49

Section 5: Real Estate Guide.. .65

'Penny for Housing' moves forward



Lady Big Horns' hoops team on a roll

Spotlight: Big Sky Big **Grass locals**

+ Winter Real Estate Guide



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor allow EBS readers to express views and share how they would like to effect change. These are not Thank You notes. Letters should be 250 words or less, respectful, ethical, accurate, and proofread for grammar and content. We reserve the right to edit letters, and will not publish individual grievances about specific businesses or letters that are abusive, malicious or potentially libelous. Include: full name, address, phone number and title. Submit to media@outlaw.partners

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Ty Guarino sends it huge off the "Goal Post" cliff Jan. 4 at Bridger Bowl. PHOTO BY CORY RANSOM

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News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners

TEDxBigSky delivers in first year

The inaugural TEDxBigSky event Jan. 28 was an undeniable success from a speaker, organizer and audience point of view. A strong thread of resilience—of not giving up—ran through an otherwise fascinatingly diverse line-up of speakers, perspectives and topics. For Ersin Ozer, Outlaw Partners Media and Events Director, TEDxBigSky license holder and master of ceremonies, the evening far exceeded his lofty expectations.

"I thought it was amazing. You spend so much time envisioning something in your head and working on it for months; to see it all come to fruition is incredible," Ozer said. "There was a moment backstage when I realized it was happening and it was going so well, and that I was standing next to one of my athlete idols [Andrew Crawford] and I'm about introduce him ... it was so cool."

Ozer also enjoyed working with a committee of friends and mentors from the Big Sky community to make TEDxBigSky a reality—and that they're already thinking about next year.

Below you'll find photos from the event and reactions from community members in attendance, as well as TEDxBigSky speakers Parisa Khosravi and Andrew Crawford. - Sarab Gianelli



From left to right: Lori Addicks, Scott Wyatt, Parisa Khosravi, Andrew Crawford, Linda Wortman, Ersin Ozer, Ann Herrmann-Nehdi. Visit tedxbigsky.com for more information. PHOTOS BY WES OVERVOLD



Lukas Nelson closed out TEDxBigSky with a solo acoustic performance

"I can't tell you how great of an event it was, from a speaker's standpoint! Your team went out of your way to make sure that it went off without a hitch!" - Andrew Crawford



"We are living in a scary time with uncertainty, no matter of your politics. Coming to a TED talk makes you realize that there are a lot of people that are good with amazing ideas. TEDxBigSky restored my faith in humanity."

- Jerry Wortman





"It was such a wonderful experience to be in Big Sky and feel the warm hospitality of this great community." - *Parisa Khosravi*





"Know we thought you were terrific. As for the talks they were fantastic. You had such a great selection of speakers and topics. It really was fantastic. Lastly, many thanks to Outlaw for putting the evening together. What an amazing effort and job well done!" - Stacy Ossorio



"What an awesome event you put on last night, congratulations! It was even better than I imagined." - *Mia Lennon*





NEWS IN BRIEF

EBS STAFF



MSU Extended University offers fundamentals of investing course

MSU NEWS SERVICE

BOZEMAN – Montana State University's Extended University will offer a non-credit course on the fundamentals of successful investing.

The course meets from 6:15-8:15 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 15 through March 8 at MSU. Parking is free on campus after 6 p.m.

The course is intended for people who want to start investing or to gain a greater understanding of investments already in place.

Instructor Jason Hundhausen will teach new or inexperienced investors the fundamentals of investments and offer information about the process of successfully investing in today's marketplace.

Participants should gain a good working understanding of the basic processes for constructing a portfolio based on a set of goals and a financial plan; the various methods used to select specific investments; and a strategy for putting their plan in place.

Hundhausen is an asset management specialist in Bozeman who is especially passionate about helping novice investors. He earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from MSU and a master's from Purdue University.

His rigorous and principled approach to investing and attention to detail replicate his engineering mindset and are key characteristics of his investment philosophy.

Participants may register online at eu.montana.edu/noncredit/ or call MSU Extended University at (406) 994-6683

School technology director receives Boyne innovation award

BIG SKY RESORT

In addition to many other perks for educators and students of the Big Sky School District, Big Sky Resort offers an additional award—comwhat he calls, "the fun stuff." It was that decision—to start the tech club, to join the jazz band, and to take on a student intern—that earned Blessing the new Boyne innovation award.

WMPAC exhibits an international flavor in February

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – Visitors to the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center will be treated to visual experiences of Russia, Iran and Tonga this month.

Lone Peak High School senior Dasha Bough's visual exploration of the evolution of a Russian princess from the czarist period to present, titled "Russia through the ages" is currently on display at WMPAC. During her Feb. 11 opening, which starts at

5 p.m., Bough



Two Iranian men enjoy a late morning cup of tea outside their friends tourist shop in Yazd, Iran. It's common to see shopkeepers surrounded by friends drinking tea all through out the day. PHOTO BY TORI PINTAR

will also present two short videos of sand art animations she created as part of the exhibit.

Bough, who plans to study art and Slavic Studies when she enrolls at Harvard this fall, said through the exhibit she aims to document Russian history and its effect on the Russian soul, through the embodiment of a Russian heroine.

Bough lived in Moscow until the age of 5 and spends a month in St. Petersburg every summer, where she studies at the Imperial Art Academy, known for its emphasis on Classical and Russian art. "I think that combination was lethal for my personality, that got me hooked," she said.

The following week marks the opening of a photojournalismoriented exhibit by Montana wedding photographers Tori Pintar and David Clumpner.

Pintar, a Big Sky local, fulfilled a long-held dream when she visited Iran in November for two-and-a-half weeks. "Now more than ever it feels so important to broaden our exposure to parts of the world that we only have a sliver of exposure to, countries like Iran, and Muslims as a whole," she said, adding that she found Iranians to be "kind, curious and incredibly warm."

plete with a season ski pass—to educators who go above and beyond expectations using innovative techniques. This year, the winner of the Boyne Innovation and Excellence in Education Award is Andrew Blessing, the school district's technology director.

Blessing's job description doesn't require any interaction with students, just computers. But for Blessing, the ability to work with students in his new position was a perk of working in the district.

And so, in his past three years on the job, Blessing has expanded his work in the district to include In addition to the special innovation award, Big Sky has also offered teachers the opportunity to apply for the Boyne Excellence in Education Award, which gives season ski passes to all teachers in the district who offer extra teaching hours outside of the school day, which result in demonstrable education gains.

Additionally, the resort company provides season passes for all students in the district from kindergarten through eighth grade, passes for teachers on ski days, half-price rentals and ski lessons, and less-expensive frequency cards, among other gifts and donations. As part of that exhibit, former Peace Corps volunteer David Clumpner will present his family portraits of an island populated by 300 people in the South Pacific country of Tonga.

Accomplished photojournalist and Big Sky local Rich Addicks will conduct a Q-and-A on photography, travel and photojournalism at 7 p.m., during their Feb. 17 opening.

"I think Rich is going to ask pretty interesting and prying questions that will get great answers out of me that I don't exist yet," Clumpner said of the forum.

Visit warrenmillerpac.org for more information.

OPINION



On Jan. 27, the Big Sky Resort Tax Board voted to continue the legislative effort on a "Penny for Housing" bill.

If the legislation passes and a ballot measure is put before voters, would you vote in favor of a 1-percent increase in resort tax for workforce housing? Why or why not?



Laura MacPherson *Big Sky, Montana*

"I would say yes, because we really need it in Big Sky. We want the workforce to be a part of our community and not be pushed out—we need affordable housing in order for that to be possible."



C.J. Radke Big Sky, Montana

"I would say no, because first I want to see the full plan. If I'm going to pay into the program, I want to know that my employees are going to be able to utilize the program."



Hannah Victory Big Sky, Montana

"I would vote for it, because I think it's important to keep this community going. It's booming right now and we need to keep it growing to keep our own lives going. But I think the tax needs to be dispersed in a way that it doesn't become a burden for our community [members]."



Tai Bright Big Sky, Montana

"I would vote for it, but I think it's important to identify the right location for affordable employee housing. I don't necessary feel like the Mountain Village is the right place for it with its high property values."



Explore Big Sky

Obituary: Eran May Dague Severn

Eran May Dague Severn fought a brave fight but ultimately succumbed to brain cancer on Dec. 10, 2016. She was born in Washington, Pennsylvania, on Oct. 1, 1942, to Frances Shriver Dague and Russell Conwell Dague. She spent her childhood in Pennsylvania before moving to Ohio to attend Muskingum University to pursue her undergraduate degree. She then moved to Ann Arbor where she received her master's in English from the University of Michigan.



It was in Michigan that she

met her husband, Charles Severn. They settled in Omaha, Nebraska, and lived there for over a decade before moving to Bismarck, North Dakota, where they resided for over 20 years. Ultimately they retired to the mountains of Big Sky, Montana, where she spent the remainder of her life. Eran spent many happy years in Bismarck actively involved in various groups as a dedicated Philanthropic Educational Organization member, a supporter of the Dakota Zoo where she served as a docent as well as a board member, and was the first female president of the board. She continued her involvement in P.E.O. in the local Bozeman chapter when she moved to Big Sky. She was also involved in the Gallatin Canyon Women's Club. She especially loved animals, birds, hiking, reading, being with friends, traveling and her family.

Eran was widely known for her contagious, distinctive laughter and for the ever present smile on her face. She was always up for an adventure, and was game for any suggestion whether it be a hike, shopping expedition or a road trip. She truly had a zest for life. She was kind, outgoing, generous and thoughtful. She had a wonderful sense of humor, and was an amazing friend, mother and wife. She was truly one of the very best. She will be terribly missed.

Eran is preceded in death by her father and mother. She is survived by her husband of 50 years, Charles Severn; sister Patricia; daughters Elizabeth (Johan), Katie (Scott) and Meg (Chris); grandchildren Annika, Rylie, Luke, Sydney and Olivia; her dogs Chloe and Charlie; and cat Clancy.

A private celebration of life will be held this summer in Big Sky. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Eran's name to the Dakota Zoo in Bismarck, North Dakota; the Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter in Bozeman, Montana; or to brain tumor research at defeatgbm.org.

Letter: How to secure opportunity for all

All major ski resorts, including Big Sky, have issues with affordable workforce housing. I'm a member of the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board, but am writing as a 44-year resident and former owner of Buck's T-4 Lodge. As a Big Sky store manager—with experience in many western resort towns—explained at the Jan. 19 BSRAD meeting, Big Sky offers the least affordable workforce housing options of any town he's experienced.

Affordable home rental and ownership was more within the reach of those who arrived in Big Sky before the sustained real estate boom, than those who arrived after. Our community's growth and success requires us to provide similar housing opportunity for today's workforce with aspirations of becoming permanent members of our community. Today, it's hard for many families to even imagine how their children might someday raise a family of their own in Big Sky.

We can no longer sit on our hands and watch legislative opportunities pass us by. The "Penny for Housing" bill at this year's Montana Legislature gives our community the opportunity to thoughtfully develop an affordable workforce housing solution, to be presented by ballot to our local voters, and then accepted or rejected.

Those seeking to kill this legislation aim to deny our community the democratic process on this important issue. Successful solutions across all ski resort towns have required private/public partnerships. Big Sky's solution will require no less to be successful. To meet the suggested 10-year goal of the Big Sky Housing Study of 200 rental and 100 owned affordable workforce-housing units, we must get started now. The logical step is to support this legislation, as the legislature will not meet again for two years.

Mike Scholz Big Sky, Montana

Letter: Resort communities need year-round citizens, workers

Resort communities frequently experience a shortage of affordable housing for local workers. Though these communities represent a significant segment of Montana's tourism economic engine—tourism is Montana's second largest economic sector—and provide significant tax revenue to cities, counties and the state, many of the essential workers are priced out of both the rental and home ownership market.

As a community becomes a popular vacation and/or retirement option, with



a limited supply of land and housing, real estate becomes increasingly unaffordable to local workers. When the workforce is displaced or priced out, it becomes more difficult to sustain a vibrant economy, to fill jobs, retain families, service visitors, and satisfy needs of the community.

A profile of residents living in resort areas that need affordable, deed-restricted housing include those who maintain and build resort communities: ski resort employees, teachers, health and safety professionals, retail service providers, artists, and local bus drivers, just to name a few. Having housing that is affordable to a number of income levels is critical to achieving not only a thriving economy, but also a diverse population and social fabric.

Legislation to provide the electorate of resort communities the opportunity to add up to 1 percent to their existing self-imposed resort tax rate—with the funds collected to be solely dedicated to workforce housing—makes sense and benefits not only the local workforce, but also all residents, visitors, and Montana as a whole. As a Big Sky Resort Area District board member and Big Sky resident, I believe the community should support this effort.

Kevin Germain Big Sky, Montana

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BIG SKY

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217 GOSHAWK TRAIL | \$4,225,000

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THE HOMESTEAD CHALETS \$1,750,000 Come experience Big Sky's newest ski-in/ski-out neighborhood! With spaciously designed interiors, oversized windows, and ample outdoor living spaces, these 5-6 bedroom, free standing condominiums combine a mix of contemporary and rustic design. Nestled at the base of Lone Mountain, these chalets provide close proximity to the base area of Big Sky Resort as well as unparalleled ski access to the White Otter chairlift. // MARY WHEELER | 406.539.1745

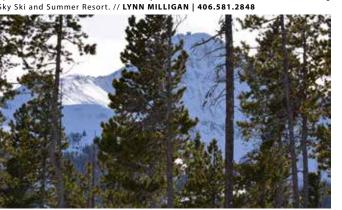




SUMMIT PENTHOUSE 11004 \$1,995,000 This four-bedroom Penthouse is situated on the 10th and 11th floors of the Summit Condominium Hotel and is a perfect legacy property for your extended family and friends! Boasting one of the largest floor plans in the building at 2,906 +/- sq. ft. of living area, it also features a spacious exterior deck overlooking the ski hill. This premier location is close to the plaza activities, restaurants, shopping and all Big Sky Resort area services. // MARY WHEELER | 406.539.1745



270 RAINBOW RANCH ROAD | \$770,700 Watch the Gallatin River flow by from the deck, fly fish from the shore or enjoy the ambiance created by the cathedral ceiling, stone fireplace and large logs. 170 feet of riverfront recreating is yours in the backyard of this two bedroom, two bath log home on 1.25 acres. One level living on the main floor and a large rec-room upstairs make the house user friendly. Located 4 miles from the entrance to Big Sky Ski and Summer Resort. // LYNN MILLIGAN | 406.581.2848



135 SUMMIT VIEW DRIVE | \$350,000

Build your dream home on this large, highly-sought after property located at the very top of the exclusive and gated Summit View neighborhood. Enjoy breathtaking, unobstructed Lone Mountain views from every room of your new home from this 2.118 acre private property that is adjacent to the neighborhood open space. Easy drive to both the Big Sky Mountain Village and Moonlight. Well and septic.// SANDY REVISKY | 406.539.6316

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Gently sloping building site with tremendous views of Lone Peak to the south, and Fan Mountain to the west. This Cascade Lot features ski-in/ski-out from the nearby Cascade lift. The price comes with a well thought out set of home plans as designed by Centre Sky Architects here in Big Sky. There has been a geo-technical study done for the site and it has recently been surveyed. The Cascade Subdivision is on the Big Sky Water and Sewer system. // MICHAEL THOMAS | 406.581.2400

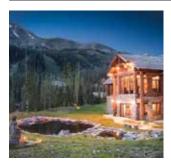


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Big Sky, Montana

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388 Andesite Ridge Rd. 4,852 SQ FT / \$6.45M



Lot 338 Bristlecone Dr 14.6 Acres / \$4.95M



Lot 86 Andesite Ridge Rd. 2.64 Acres / \$3.3M

MOONLIGHT BASIN



Lot 144A Pumice Rd. 2 Acres / \$2.65M

BIG SKY



Kandahar at Beehive Basin 5,409 SQ FT / \$3.45M

SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB



Lot 107 Elk Valley Rd. 2.48 Acres / \$599.9K



Lot 119 Old Barn Rd. 3.13 Acres / \$450K



Lot 109 W. Elk Valley Rd. 2.33 Acres / \$395K



Luxury Suite 1B 2,563 SQ FT / \$1.445M

BIG SKY



Lot 287A Rising Bull Rd. 1.04 Acres / \$529K



Lot 43A Half Moon Ct. 2.95 Acres / \$499.9K



Park Condo 283 2,090 SQ FT / \$440K



Summit Hotel 409/410 1,324 SQ FT / \$424.7K



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BOZEMAN



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Lot 14 Chokecherry Lane Hebgen Lake 1.08 Acres / \$97.5K

RANCH & RECREATION



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Rahn Grain Farms *Three Forks, MT* 3,362 Acres / \$6.995M

RANCH & RECREATION

COMMERCIAL





TBD Camp Creek Road *Bozeman,MT* 303 Acres / \$1.29M

Bangtail Springs Ranch *Bozeman, MT* See agent for details



Big Sky Entrance Property Big Sky, MT 4.61 Acres / \$3.24M



Marketplace Unit 104 *Big Sky, MT* 1,204 SQ FT / \$470,580



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SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB



2535 Ousel Falls Road 4,701 SQ FT / \$2.95M



Homestead Cabin #2 3,635 SQ FT / \$2.95M



Homestead Cabin #6 2,585SQ FT / \$1.99M



Ski Tip Lot 10 1.02 Acres / \$875K



Ski Tip Lot 8 1.11 Acres / \$825K

BIG SKY



214 W. Pine Cone Terrace 4,268 SQ FT / \$1.35M



Mountain Selah 4,574 SQ FT / \$1.35M



330 Beaver Mountain Trl. 2,293 SQ FT / \$780K



Spanish Peaks Club Condo 40 2,969 SQ FT / \$659.9K

BOZEMAN



13 Beartooth 2,782 SQ FT / \$550K

BIG SKY



Lot 3 Windy Pass Trl. 5.63 Acres / \$449.9K



Lot 1 Ciel Drive 8.03 ACRES / \$415K



Lot 3 Joy Rd. 6.83 Acres / \$415K



Limestone Creek 10,297 SQ FT / \$12.9M



512 Old Farm Rd. 5,497 SQ FT / \$2.975M

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Missouri River Ranch *Craig, MT* 160 Acres / \$6.5M



McReynolds Middle Parcels Gallatin Gateway, MT 520 Acres / \$5.2M



Mountain Meadows Big Sky, MT 120 Acres / \$3.495M



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



RJS Tower Unit 205/207 *Big Sky, MT* 961 SQ FT / \$339K



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A house divided 'Penny for Housing' brings turmoil to resort tax meetings

BY TYLER ALLEN EBS MANAGING EDITOR

BIG SKY – Affordable workforce housing has been the No. 1 issue in this community for years and in January it came to a head in the Big Sky Resort Area District boardroom.

The BSRAD tax board met on the three separate occasions during the month, on the fourth, 19th and 27th, drawing more public attendance and comment than any meeting in recent memory.

In contention is a legislative effort to pass a "Penny for Housing" bill. On Jan. 27 the board voted to move forward with lobbying for the bill, which would allow resort areas and communities in Montana to let voters decide on raising their tax up to 1 percent for "workforce housing and related needs." State law currently caps resort tax at 3 percent.

In the 2015 Montana Legislature, a similar bill failed in a 25-25 tie in the Senate. As BSRAD attorney Mona Jamison noted in a Dec. 12 conference call with the board, the 2017 Legislature is more conservative and tax-averse than its predecessor, and the bill could be facing an uphill battle—that already has started here in Big Sky. BSRAD board member Kevin Germain estimates it has a 50 percent chance of passing.

At the Jan. 4 resort tax meeting, Big Sky Resort General Manager Taylor Middleton voiced his opposition to the 1-percent increase. He said existing resort tax revenue is available for affordable housing; the board could look to services not currently being taxed, like membership dues to private clubs including the Yellowstone Club; and that existing BSRAD collections have increased by 13 percent over the past five years.

Middleton also suggested a real estate transfer tax could be used—though the board stated such a tax is unconstitutional in Montana—and said resort tax already funded a \$1 million project for affordable housing.

In June, the BSRAD board appropriated \$1.05 million to the Big Sky Community Housing Trust for its first project on the Bough Big Sky Community Housing Subdivision, due to break ground in March. Those dollars were appropriated in part from the BSRAD sinking fund.

The following two January meetings were also held before a packed boardroom with impassioned and extensive public comment from those both for and against the legislative action. Visit facebook.com/ explorebigsky to view video of those meetings.

"I thought there would be more vocal opposition than there actually was [at the January meetings]," said BSRAD board member Ginna Hermann in a Feb. 1 interview. "We've met with many of the stakeholders, both pro and con, to help us understand their perspectives. Individually stakeholders did reach out to tax board members."

Resort tax board members are legally allowed to meet with stakeholders individually, and often do leading up to the appropriations process. In her eight years on the board, Hermann said she's never seen such community interest in the resort tax process as the January meetings generated—outside of the annual Q-and-A and appropriations forums.

The board voted 3-2 on a motion to continue the "Penny for Housing" lobbying effort on Jan. 27, with Mike Scholz, Kevin Germain and Hermann in favor, and Jamey Kabisch and Heather Budd in opposition.

In a Feb. 1 interview, Budd said she was opposed because she feels that resort tax can't solve this problem on its own. She also cited the Big Sky Community Housing Trust project as a good use of funds to address affordable housing.

"I feel the Bough parcel is really good example of a private donor, with a developer building it with low fees, and resort tax coming in with the last million, not the first million," she said.

Budd added she's also talked to a number of small business owners and retailers who fear the tax increase would put them at more of a disadvantage to Bozeman and online retailers, which don't pay the resort tax. She is especially concerned about those small business owners that own their own housing for employees and, "shouldn't bear the brunt of this."

Additionally, she cited her constituency. "I also have to represent the people that voted for me, and a lot of people are coming to me that are against [the tax increase].

"We're not a community working on this together right now," she added.

When asked to respond to Budd's concerns, Scholz said he understands but cited the 7 percent lodging tax that Big Sky hotels collect—4 percent earmarked for advertising by the state—on top of the 3 percent resort tax. "This is about the up to 1 percent," Sholz said. "I haven't found a retailer yet that hasn't said the 3 percent has made their lives better. The 3 percent has been advantageous for all of us in regards to how the resort has developed."

He added that people should separate the 1 percent from the 3 percent tax that's already being collected. For Scholz, it's also a legacy issue for Big Sky's future.

He said increasing the tax by 1 percent so people who work in this rural resort town have the opportunity to live here, and participate in the community, is much more advantageous than the added cost incurred.

Middleton said in a Feb. 1 email to EBS that, "Big Sky Resort is a supporter of affordable workforce housing, both projects that we do ourselves with our own funding, and those done by and for the community. The Resort Tax is currently funding affordable housing, as evidenced by a \$1 million allocation this year alone. A new law is unnecessary to create affordable housing solutions."

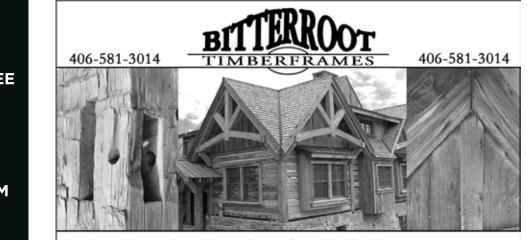
He cited a recent survey by the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce that found 39 percent of respondents were opposed to the 1-percent increase, despite "I am in favor" of the legislation being pre-checked. According to chamber interim CEO Britt Ide, that was a technical glitch in the online survey.

"Big Sky Resort was one of the original supporters of resort tax legislation over 20 years ago," Middleton said. "Back then, I testified before the Legislature in support of collecting a resort tax for the betterment of my community. This time, alongside many other community members, I'll be testifying against a tax increase because it's unnecessary."

He added the resort currently owns 450 seasonal workforce-housing beds and have another 200 "shovel ready."

"None of the [current] resort tax can be specified for workforce housing, we're looking for the ability to actually target dollars for workforce housing," Hermann said. "There would be a lot of study and research before a vote went to the public ... nothing would be done in a vacuum."

As of EBS press time on Feb. 1, the resort tax board had spent \$36,500 on the lobbying effort—including defensive lobbying by Jamison—of a projected \$55,000 if the effort is successful. The next Big Sky Resort Area Tax Board meeting is Feb. 8 at 5 p.m.



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Big Sky's largest employers hint at workforce housing solutions

BY AMANDA EGGERT EBS SENIOR EDITOR

BIG SKY –You would be hard-pressed to find a resident here who says there isn't a need for affordable housing. But as soon as you start talking about how an affordable housing program should be implemented—and who should foot the bill—the conversation quickly becomes heated.

On the heels of three weeks of impassioned debate about a 1 percent increase on the resort tax to fund affordable housing (see "A House Divided" on the opposite page), senior management at the Yellowstone Club, Lone Mountain Land Company and Big Sky Resort spoke in varying degrees of detail about their businesses' attempts to address the long-standing issue.

At a town hall meeting hosted by the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce on Jan. 24 at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, affordable housing was the primary focus of the ensuing Q-and-A.

In response to a question about whether or not Yellowstone Club is considering building workforce housing on its property, Yellowstone Club General Manager Hans Williamson said, "Not at this time. Our preferred area of housing would be in this community."

He added that the club, which employs a rapidly growing workforce, can house 12-21 employees on site. It provides off-site housing in ranch, hotel and condominium contracts for up to 202 employees.

"We are actively looking at affordable housing projects in Moonlight Basin [and] in Town Center," said Lone Mountain Land Company Executive Vice President Alex Iskendarian in response to the same question. He added that LMLC is looking into seasonal rentals, long-term rentals for management-level employees, and ownership programs.

Williamson was also asked if the Yellowstone Club will start collecting a resort tax on its membership dues. He said the Yellowstone Club collects resort tax on all the items that other Big Sky businesses do, like restaurants, and skis and apparel, but has historically only collected taxes on guest skiing and golf—not member skiing and golf. "We've been audited a number of times [and] that subject never came up," Williamson said. "However, that said, we approached the resort tax board two meetings ago and volunteered to pay taxes on the fair market value of our [member] skiing and on our golf."

Williamson said the Yellowstone Club collected about \$710,000 in resort taxes and about \$700,000 in lodging tax in 2016.

Big Sky Resort's Director of Real Estate and Development Brian Wheeler said that worker housing is as integral to the resort's expansion as "the foundation or the roof of the project we're creating.

"If we don't sacrifice and we don't provide one-third of our workers with seasonal workforce housing, we're placing the burden on you as a community," he added.

Wheeler said the resort has two projects that are "shovel ready" for building this summer. Once built, those projects will add about 100 pillows to existing Golden Eagle accommodations in the Meadow and 100 pillows to Mountain Lodge housing.

Brian Guyer, the acting director of the Big Sky Community Housing Trust, gave an update on the trust's flagship 32-unit project. He said the committee will prioritize applicants who have year-round, full-time employment in Big Sky; a minimum credit score of 650; and demonstrated commitment to the community in the form of one year of involvement with a local nonprofit or the enrollment of a child in the Big Sky School District.

In a post-meeting interview, Guyer said although a lawsuit between parcel donor Loren Bough and local developer Packy Cronin is ongoing, he doesn't believe it will impact the housing trust or the Bough Big Sky Community Subdivision.

Guyer said the subdivision proposal will go before county commissioners at the Gallatin County Courthouse on Feb. 28 for preliminary plat approval and he urged anybody who supports affordable housing to attend the 9 a.m. hearing.

The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce's next town hall meeting will address incorporation and taxes. A date has not yet been set.



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LOCAL

Explore Big Sky

Big Sky School District takes Great Kindness Challenge

BY SARAH GIANELLI EBS CONTRIBUTOR

BIG SKY – On Jan. 30, uniformed representatives of the Big Sky Fire Department and Gallatin County Sheriff's office, as well as parents and teachers, lined the sidewalks outside of Ophir Elementary School cheering on students as they entered the building in all manners of Hawaiian-themed dress.

The "kindness tunnel" marked the official start of The Great Kindness Challenge, a global anti-bullying initiative in which more than 10 million students in 90 countries commit to completing a checklist of 50 acts of kindness during the five-day campaign that concluded Feb. 3. More than a dozen Big Sky businesses and organizations participated throughout the week by donating their services, gift certificates and time to the community at large, or to the volunteer effort at the school.

Inside the school, the festive spirit was well underway. Under a ceiling of colorful streamers and positive placards was a wishing well whose "kind coin" contributions would be donated for building a school in Pakistan. A paper chain made of links with words of kindness scribbled on them by students snaked its way toward the gymnasium, where a kick-off pep rally was held.

At the microphone, trying to corral the buzz of elementary and middle school children as they filed onto the bleachers, was elementary school counselor Jackie Clawson, responsible for spearheading the school district's participation in The Great Kindness Challenge. She and the K-5 teachers, also sporting Hawaiian shirts, grass skirts and leis, took turns outlining the week's events—each day had a costume theme—and showing examples of acts of kindness: giving a teacher a flower or putting a nice note in a friend's backpack.



PHOTO BY WES OVERVOLD

After a great many "Oh yeahs!" and call and response cheers, all of the students gathered in the middle of the gym forming the shape of a heart. It may have been a little misshapen, but it was redeemed by its exuberant constituents.

"As a school counselor bullying is always on my radar," Clawson said after the rally. "However, I don't really like to use the word 'bullying'; I'd rather focus on the great things kids do because it builds that kindness culture."

Clawson said the kindness challenge reflects a philosophy change in the school-counseling paradigm—a shift away from admonitions, toward focusing on positive alternatives or framing.

Clawson explained that the challenge is educational for the students on so many levels, from developing skills like goal setting—the children receive a

checklist to work through—to providing a sense of ownership by engaging them in the appearance of their school, and providing a burst of energy and enthusiasm at the start of the second semester.

"It's also important that we teach the students to listen to other people's perspectives and treat them equally kind no matter what," Clawson said. "I think it sometimes gets drowned out in the negativity of media stories. The good stories don't always get heard."

Fourth grader Blaise Ballantyne acted as BSSD's Great Kindness Challenge Ambassador. He visited classrooms to explain the challenge to his peers and coordinated the school-wide creation of the kindness chain.

"It has been a ton of work," Ballantyne said. "But it sends a message to be kind. You have to put some effort into it."





Inside the Big Sky | By Derek Lennon

The best ski runs at Big Sky Resort

BY DEREK LENNON EBS CONTRIBUTOR

The skiing and snowboarding at Big Sky Resort is some of the best in the world. Whether you're here for a week, a season or even a lifetime, Big Sky's terrain will keep any level of skier or rider grinning from ear to ear.

The lack of crowds, the world-class terrain, the great snowpack, and the mountain town of Big Sky is the definition of what every skier and rider wants in a mountain (or a vacation).

One of the great things about Big Sky is that there is terrain that appeals to everyone. From the bunny hill novice to the aspiring pro, and everyone in between, there are always fun runs to explore. Whether you love groomers, trees, steeps, bumps, park, hikes, chutes, couloirs or snowfields, you'll find plenty of it on Big Sky's 5800 acres of terrain.

People often want to know what the best ski runs at Big Sky Resort are. Well, that's a tough question. Everyone enjoys a different type of skiing so everyone will have a different opinion. It all comes down to your ability level, the terrain that you like to ski, and the current snow conditions. As you can imagine there's no official list of the best ski runs in Big Sky, but there are certainly more than a few lines that are worth checking out.

Below you'll find an unofficial list of the best ski runs at Big Sky Resort. Add these fun runs to your tick list. If you're really looking for the best skiing in Big Sky, hire a guide, book an instructor, or start a conversation on a chairlift with a local—while these Big Sky fanatics may not share their secret stashes, they'll certainly point you toward some fun runs. If you're more of a DIY type, check out the Big Sky Resort trail map and see what you can find—just try not to get in over your head!

For people unfamiliar with Big Sky, it can be tough to imagine how incredible this mountain really is. The best way to describe it is: if you fell asleep and dreamed about skiing, you're probably picturing Big Sky, Montana. This place is the real deal.

Grab your gear and explore the "Biggest Skiing In America." Then you can decide what the best ski runs in Big Sky are for yourself.

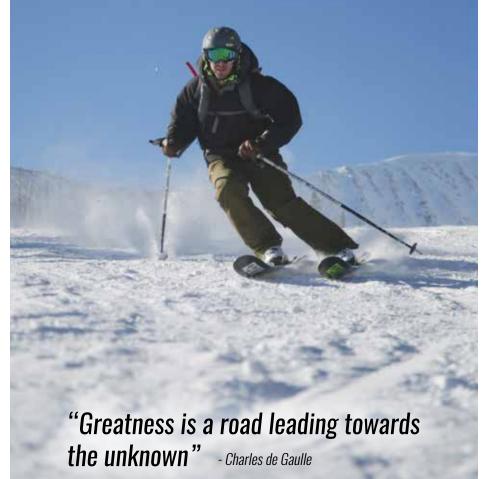
Derek Lennon is a skier and writer who lives, works, and plays in the mountains of the world. He is based in Big Sky, Montana, where he lives with his wife Mia and two dogs.

A version of this story was originally published on the Visit Big Sky blog at https://visithigskymt.com/best-ski-runs-big-sky/.Read more interesting content about the area on Visit Big Sky's blog at https://visithigskymt.com/category/blog/.



THANK YOU, JOE

Wishing you the best of luck in your new adventures! Thank you for being such an inspirational and impactful figure in the Big Sky community.





Big Sky Resort has everything a skier or snowboarder could want, from long green circle cruisers to double-black diamond no-fall zones. PHOTO BY DEREK LENNON

Green beginner runs:

Mr. K, Sacagawea, Cinnabar, Deep South

Blue intermediate runs:

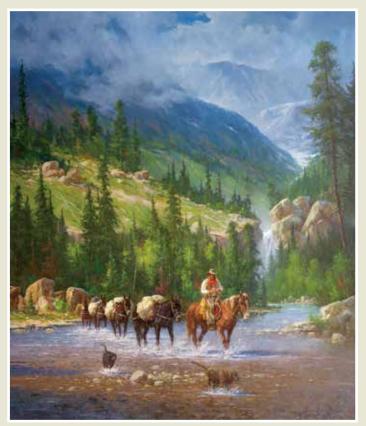
Ski Time, Africa, Lookout Ridge, White Witch, Lizette, Whiskey, Silverknife, Elk Park

Black diamond advanced runs:

Liberty Bowl, Bavarian Forest, Moonlight, Country Club, Midnight, Blue Room, South Wall, The Bowl

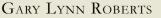
Double black diamond expert runs:

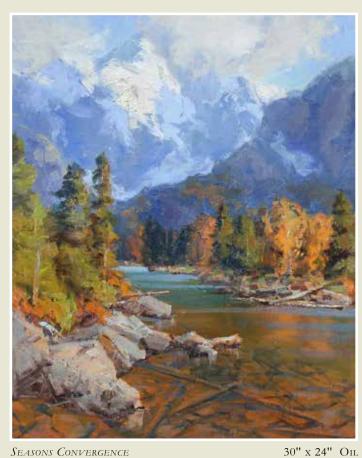
Big Couloir, North Summit Snowfield, the Headwaters, A to Z Chutes, Dictators, Big Rock Tongue



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LOCAL

Tell me, Tallie Why is there no mail delivery in Big Sky?



BY TALLIE LANCEY EBS COLUMNIST

We all remember our first time. Nervous and unsure, we sought to establish a foothold in our new hometown. Then, we all encountered one of two unforgettable mailroom characters. If you started as a Big Sky Resort employee, you met the legendary Charlie Davie. Jean "The Queen" Palmer oriented all other newcomers. Either way, they reassured us by giving us an address in Big Sky.

But then after we settled in, we found ourselves wondering, "Wait, why isn't there mail delivery here? Why doesn't UPS or FedEx recognize my physical address?" Until I began researching this column, I pondered the same questions. The answers are found in the stories of Palmer and Davie.

Davie has run the Big Sky Resort mailroom for 31 years and to describe the man as an institution is understatement. He now works alongside his wife Nyla and their son Jordan, and after only a few minutes in their mailroom, they make you feel like family, despite distributing mail and packages to approximately 1000 people. This includes international seasonal workers, convention attendees and Boyne staff. Their warm smiles greet parcels from Amazon.com and Argentinian mothers. If you're having a bad day, visit the Davie family near the loading dock in the Huntley Lodge.

Queen Jean, as most locals know Palmer, developed her moniker via two converging routes. In 1999, our unassuming mail lady dominated the local ski-and-party scene, earning her crown in Big Sky's "Dirt Bag" royalty. Ever since, she has been the queen bee in our local hive of mail activity. When I asked her if the reason we don't have mail delivery is that she doesn't want to do it, she giggled.

"No, I'd love to drive a mail truck!" Palmer said. Instead, her staff buzzes around 1661 post office boxes and roughly 800 "General Delivery" recipients. Jean knows basically everyone who lives in or has ever lived in Big Sky.

Predating Palmer and Davie, we have to go way back in time to find the logistical answer to the absence of local home mail delivery. The Gallatin Gateway post office originally serviced the few hardy souls whose addresses were on the precious ground we now call Big Sky.

In the mid-1970s, John McCulley with the Big Sky Owners Association recognized a need for a local postal distribution center. He cleverly struck an agreement with the U.S. Postal Service to pay BSOA to service its burgeoning community in exchange for providing mail collection and distribution. Thus, Big Sky's "contract" post office was born.

Since then, all of the neighborhoods off of Lone Mountain Trail have been serviced by iterations of that contract. Neighborhoods in Gallatin Canyon continue to get their mail delivered by dedicated Gallatin Gateway postal workers—some routes surpass 100 miles round-trip, snowstorm or shine. Talk

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My friends back East snicker when I tell them that I love my daily visit to the Big Sky post office. Of course, there are bills, junk catalogues, and political mumbojumbo. But there are also care packages, handwritten letters, and invitations to weddings and retirement parties. Best of all, Queen Jean and the Davie family make the pilgrimage a memorable one. They've created a post office culture that's part and parcel of our town's identity.

Your first mail experience in Big Sky won't make you "go postal." It'll make you nostalgic, fondly clinging to a time and place that hasn't yet slipped through your fingers. You have, in your grasp, the best address in America.

Tell me, Tallie, are you wondering why something is particularly unique to our community? You want to know and I'm eager to learn. This column commits to answering your burning questions about why Big Sky exists the way it does. Ask me at tallie@reallybigsky.com.

Tallie Lancey is a broker with Big Sky Sotheby's International Realty and spends her free time serving Big Sky on the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center board of directors and in other various ways.

Montana lawmakers work on suicide prevention legislation

BY MICHAEL SIEBERT um community news service university of montana school of journalism

HELENA - During his State of the State address Tuesday, Gov. Steve Bullock said that he "cannot tolerate that Montana leads the nation in youth suicide."

"I am haunted by this statistic," Bullock said.

The governor isn't the only one with mental health on his mind this legislative session. Throughout the first several weeks of the 65th Montana Legislature, lawmakers from both sides of the aisle have introduced bills that seek to institute suicide prevention measures and overhaul crisis prevention efforts.

Montana had the highest suicide rate in the country in 2014, and has been in the top five states with the highest suicide rates for nearly 40 years, according to a Department of Health and Human Services report from last year. The report cited Montana's relative isolation, as well as access to firearms, alcohol and other factors as contributors to the problem.

The youth suicide rate is particularly concerning for legislators. Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, D-Helena, is sponsoring House Bill 265, a bill that would provide a limited number of grants to schools to help them implement suicide prevention programs.

During the bill's first reading, Dunwell noted the high suicide rate in her own district. She pointed to Helena High School, where six students have committed suicide in the last four years.

"I don't have to tell you how tragic that is," Dunwell said.

Dunwell said she became interested in mental health reform after watching a family member struggle with mental illness. After that person attempted suicide, Dunwell said she met other youths affected by suicide in a family support group, which helped spark her interest.

"Once [suicide] happens, it's not treatable because it's irreversible," Dunwell said. "Prevention is where we have to be."



In order to fund these programs, Dunwell proposed a one percent increase on rental car taxes, which she said would largely only affect tourists.

Dunwell also introduced House Bill 176, which would require primary care physicians to give depression screenings to patients 12 years or older as part of general wellness exams. The bill would apply to all state-run health programs.

"My hope is that doctors who are doing the screening ... will just do it for all the patients, and it'll become the norm," Dunwell said.

A community approach

Just as Montana has unique factors that contribute to its high suicide rate, certain communities require approaches more tailored to their needs.

Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy, D-Box Elder, is sponsoring House Bill 23, which would create a pilot program for reservation communities to combat youth suicide. Native American youths are the demographic most likely to commit suicide in Montana, according to the DPHHS report.

"We don't have mental health specialists that address these particular issues," Windy Boy said.

Windy Boy also has a personal relationship with suicide. When presenting HB 23 last week, he told the House Appropriations committee about a teenage girl from Havre who committed suicide in 2015. The girl was his granddaughter.

HB 23 takes a cultural approach to suicide prevention, taking significant influence from tribal elders.

Windy Boy said on the Rocky Boy reservation, residents have little in the way of established mental health services. He said people experiencing suicidal urges are typically rushed to Northern Montana Hospital's recovery floor, where they are not enough professionals to address the issue. He also said that the reservation has a contract with a psychiatrist from Florida, who is only able to travel to Rocky Boy two times a year.

The pilot program would equip those who live on reservations with the skills necessary to address suicide in a more nuanced way.

"There are some teachings as far as how to address this," Windy Boy said. "That's why I feel it's important to make sure that these preventive measures should start on a local level."

The question of funding

But with budget constraints affecting every aspect of the legislature, funding for new mental health programs could be difficult to come by.

Republican Majority Leader Ron Ehli, R-Hamilton, wants to work within the confines of existing programs.

Ehli is sponsoring House Bill 237, which would require the state's board of crime control to develop a crisis intervention training program. The program would teach law enforcement, first responders and other providers how to properly respond in situations where someone is having a mental health crisis. The bill passed the House 99-1 and now moves to the Senate.

The programs would be funded using only available funds. Grants would extend to tribal law enforcement agencies.

"It's a sad day that we have to make decisions on legislation or things like mental health," Ehli said. "My approach is, let's find a program that's almost already

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Many mental health advocates support these lawmakers.

Matt Kuntz has spoken on several bills tackling many different aspects of mental health care. As the executive director for the state chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Health, Kuntz wants to ensure the bills passed by the legislature take an evidence-based approach.

"The last thing that anybody wants to do is move critical state resources into programs that aren't demonstrated to be effective," Kuntz said.

Kuntz said that he has cast a wide net of support in part because he wants to be able to lend his input on any programs the state wants to implement pertaining to mental health care. He said it's the role of legislators to decide which bills are implemented — he just wants to make sure the ones that are do their job effectively.

"We're willing to work with all of the legislators to try to improve the mental illness treatment system," Kuntz said.

Michael Siebert is a reporter with the UM Community News Service, a partnership of the University of Montana School of Journalism and the Montana Newspaper Association.



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Explore Big Sky

Section 2: ENVIRONMENT, **BUSINESS, & SPORTS**



Doctor's Note: Thumb injuries on the mountain pg. 27





The New West: Russell Rowland's new book offers extraordinary insight into Treasure State



BY TODD WILKINSON EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

Montana-are we a red state or blue one? Writer Russell Rowland visited every single county in Montanacovering an expanse of landscape equal to a couple of New Englands—to get a better sense of who we are.

What he produced, the remarkable book "Fifty-Six Counties: A Montana Journey" (Bangtail Press), published

in April 2016, offers an eye-opening look into the Treasure State. Recently, I spoke with Rowland.

Todd Wilkinson: Former U.S. Sen. Max Baucus walked across Montana decades ago in making his first bid to serve in Congress. Looking back at your odyssey, what are a few things you know now that you didn't at the start of your journey?

Russell Rowland: I think the thing that surprised me the most from this trip was the optimism. You hear about the high suicide rate in Montana, and it's no big secret that the rural areas are really struggling right now, but Montanans seem to have this relentless idea in their heads that everything is about to turn, no matter how bad it might seem on the surface.

I'm guessing much of that comes from the fact that we have always been a state that relies on such boom and bust economic structures. There is a certain level of expectation that things will occasionally get really tough for a while. People almost plan for it.

T.W.: Is Montana an urban or rural state?

R.R.: The short answer would be yes—it is both, urban and rural, red and blue. But like most things about Montana, it's way more complicated than that. It certainly started out as a rural state, although the influence of Butte was pretty pervasive in those early decades. So there's always [been] a bit of an urban element. But in terms of the mentality and the worldview, I think it's still very much on the rural side.

I heard this morning at a gathering that 70 percent of our population now lives in the urban centers in the state, which would include Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, Helena, Kalispell and Great Falls. But many of these urban centers are still very much made up of rural people.

T.W.: Author J.D. Vance won acclaim for his book "Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis," which delves into some of the fear and angst that resulted in Donald Trump's election. Did you find Trump's winning of Montana to be a surprise?

R.R.: I wasn't surprised at all by the fact that Trump won in Montana, mainly because of the strong anti-government stance that so many people have in this state. Our history suggests that this anti-government [sentiment] was strong from the beginning, and that many people came by it honestly. Hillary [Clinton] represents the very thing that most of Montana has come to distrust about government over a long history. Whether it's true or not, the fact that they were able to imply that she has been followed by scandal fits right into the narrative that would appeal to Montanans and their libertarian bent.

R.R.: It's a microcosm in that so much of our history follows a very distinct pattern of having big companies come in here and present themselves as saviors to the working class. Starting with the Copper Kings and the railroads, many huge companies have created jobs that brought a flood of people out here hoping to live the American dream. And it seems that the working stiffs are always the ones left in the lurch once these companies either fold or pull out.

Many people have gotten wealthy off of Montana's resources, without putting much back into the state. And the mess they leave behind often ends up being another huge tax burden on our people, [including] three of the largest Superfund sites in the country.

The thing that makes Montana unique is the strong attraction of the quality of life here. So many people stated that as the first reason to why people come to their county. Montana is a place people fall in love with in a way that seems to be almost unprecedented, even compared to our neighboring states.

Todd Wilkinson has been a journalist for 30 years. He writes his New West column every week, and it's published on explorebigsky.com on EBS off weeks. Wilkinson authored the recent award-winning book "Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek: An Intimate Portrait of 399, the Most Famous Bear of Greater Yellowstone," featuring 150 astounding images by renowned American nature photographer Thomas Mangelsen. His new article on climate change, "2067: The Clock Struck Thirteen," appears in the winter 2017 edition of Mountain Outlaw magazine. The New West also appears every week at thebullseye.media.

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My fear is that Trump is a classic example of someone who has managed to gather the support of the very people that will suffer most from his policies.

T.W.: For rural communities, is there a way to keep them alive?

R.R.: I think that's going to be the crucial question for Montana's future. Almost every town east of Billings has declined in population since the 1950s, and it's hard to imagine that ever changing direction. The small towns that are still showing signs of life in Montana are the ones who embrace different options for their economic structure, especially tourism, which has moved up to second in the state after agriculture [in terms of revenue].

But there are many towns that don't have much to attract tourists, and it's hard to see other options for those places. One thing I found kind of amusing-the main employer for most of these towns is the very government they love to belittle. There's an odd disconnect there. Many of these counties wouldn't exist if it wasn't for government jobs.

T.W.: How is Montana a microcosm for the rest of America?

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Colstrip power plant closure could come earlier than 2022

BY MATTHEW BROWN AND MATT VOLZ ASSOCIATED PRESS

BILLINGS (AP) – A partial closure of an aging coal-fired power plant serving customers across the Pacific Northwest could come earlier than planned depending on the actions of its co-owner and Montana lawmakers, according to documents released Jan. 17 by Washington state regulators.

The documents submitted by Puget Sound Energy detail its plan to retire two of Colstrip's four generating units.

The 2,100-megawatt facility is one of the largest coal-fired plants in the West. It's seen as increasingly uneconomical to operate because of competition from cheaper power sources and mounting pollution control costs.

Puget Sound has a 50 percent share of Colstrip Units 1 and 2, which were built in the 1970s. The utility reached an agreement last year with environmentalists that requires their closure by July 2022.

Puget Sound representatives warned that could happen sooner given that coowner Talen Energy wants to exit its role as Colstrip's day-to-day operator by mid-2018.

The ownership group is seeking a third party to take over as operator, with initial bids due in February, said Ronald Roberts, director of thermal resources for Puget Sound.

"Our intent right now it to operate through July 1, 2022," Roberts said. "A lot of the caveats that are out there are outside our control."

Talen spokesman Todd Martin declined comment.

Talen also operates Units 3 and 4 at Colstrip, which were built in the 1980s and are co-owned by Puget Sound, Talen, Northwestern Energy, PacificCorp, Portland General Electric and Avista. There are no plans to close those more efficient units.

Puget Sound suggested an early closure for the two older units also could be prompted by pending measures before the Montana Legislature, including an increase in the wholesale energy tax rate.

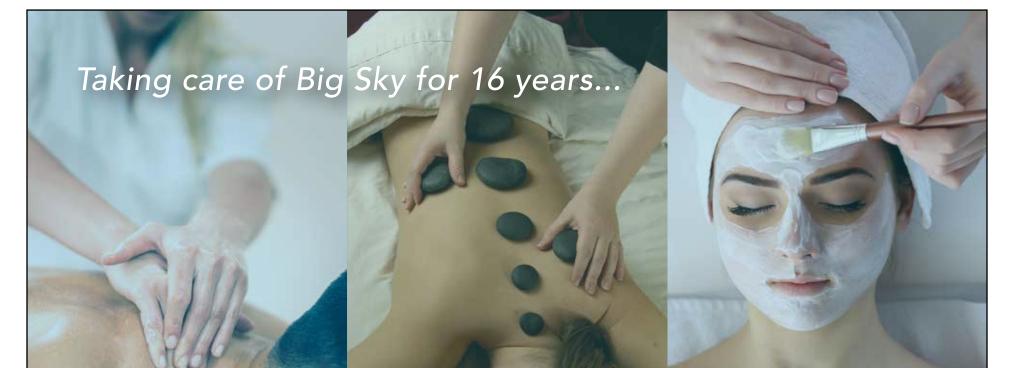
Roberts said the tax increase could make Units 1 and 2 less economical than power from other sources.

The measure by Montana Rep. Jim Keane, D-Butte, would double the tax from .015 to .030 cent per kilowatt hour on electricity generated by power plants that is put on transmission lines.

Half the money collected would go into the state's general fund and the other half would go into a new account for grants and loans to help communities where a power plant is closing.

Keane said Puget Sound could seek an early closure of the power plant but would need the approval of the investment firm Riverstone Holdings LLC, which bought Colstrip co-owner Talen Energy last year. Keane said he hopes the private company will be more receptive to operating the plant as long as possible.

"I think you have to take the threat seriously, but at the same time they can't close the plant down without the cooperation of both owners," Keane said. Other bills pending in Montana would require Puget Sound and Talen to submit a decommissioning and remediation plan to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and a measure appropriating \$130,000 to allow the state to intervene in Puget Sound's rate case in Washington state.





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Wyoming proposal would require utilities to use fossil fuels

BY MEAD GRUVER Associated press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) – A group of Wyoming lawmakers is bucking the U.S. trend of supporting renewable energy with a plan to do the opposite: Fine utilities if they provide energy produced by wind or the sun.

Blustery Wyoming ranks among the top states for wind-energy potential, but the coal, oil and natural gas industries are the backbone of the state's economy. With a \$360 million budget shortfall in public education caused by downturns in those industries and corresponding state revenue declines, legislators are hard-pressed for solutions.

Renewable energy, some say, has been overly promoted and subsidized by government at the expense of the fossil fuel industry.

"I want the electricity at my house generated by coal, because that's the cheapest way to go," said Rep. David Miller, a Republican, of the fossil-fuel requirement he's co-sponsoring with eight others.

The measure makes for an increasingly complicated relationship between Wyoming and renewable energy, even as roads are built for the biggest land-based wind project in the U.S.

The Chokecherry and Sierra Madre project in south-central Wyoming will have 1,000 turbines and be able to generate electricity for close to 1 million homes in a state with just 584,000 people.

The project will sprawl across 340 square miles of barely inhabited sagebrush foothills where the wind speed averages more than 15 mph and frequently gusts above 50 mph.

Wyoming Senate President Eli Bebout said he does not like the idea of penalizing renewable energy producers.

But he argues that Wyoming's electricity customers pay more than they should for electricity because some of what they receive comes from other states that subsidize renewable energy production.

"I don't believe that we should subsidize their beliefs and their legislation and their direction on how to do renewables," Bebout said.

Wyoming is the nation's top coal-mining state, but some experts question whether favoring coal so much would be good policy and make energy cheaper for customers over the long term.

The trend of wind and solar energy production becoming less expensive will continue for years, said Rob Godby, an associate professor and director of the Center for Energy Economics and Public Policy at the University of Wyoming.

The legislators' push to punish renewable energy use "clearly picks a preferred energy source regardless of cost. This may not only cost ratepayers and consumers in Wyoming, but it could harm our potential to attract new industry," Godby said.

The bill would penalize utility-scale solar and wind because those producers are less able to respond quickly to fluctuating demand for power. Natural gas power plants can fire up quickly when millions of people turn on their air conditioners during a heat wave.

But the wind does not blow all the time and solar energy installations cannot produce electricity at night, making them less versatile than fossil fuels that can be burned whenever electricity is needed.

The bill would require all utilities serving Wyoming to obtain their electricity from sources other than commercial-scale wind or solar operations by 2019. Utilities would be fined \$10 per renewable energy megawatt hour used in a year, the amount of energy it takes to power 82 Wyoming homes.

Utilities oppose the bill but "have been working with the bill sponsors to try to understand what their concerns are and come up with something that works," said Dave Eskelsen, spokesman for Rocky Mountain Power, a Utahbased utility serving Wyoming that gets about 11 percent of electricity from wind power and geothermal energy.

Wyoming doesn't have any significant commercial solar projects yet though an 80-megawatt solar plant is planned in the high desert of the western part of the state.

A spokeswoman for Power Company of Wyoming, which is building the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre wind farm, said the company has no position on the bill because the wind farm's electricity will go to southwestern U.S. states and help meet California's goal of using 50 percent renewable energy by 2030.

Power Company of Wyoming is a wholly owned subsidiary of Denver billionaire Phil Anschutz's The Anschutz Corp., which traces its roots to and remains in the oil business.

Thirty-seven states now have renewable energy utility portfolio standards or goals including Hawaii, which plans to get all of its electricity from renewable energy by 2045. Wyoming is among the 13 states without any upcoming requirement or goals.

Wyoming's proposal to penalize utilities that supply solar and wind power appears to be unprecedented, said Jeremy Nichols, an anti-coal activist with the Santa Fe, New Mexico-based environmental group WildEarth Guardians.

"While the coal industry certainly has disdain for renewables, it's shocking to see the industry's allies in the state legislature launch such a brazen attack on utility development of wind and solar," Nichols said.





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EYEONTHE BALL Historic draft class for running backs



BY BRANDON NILES EBS SPORTS COLUMNIST

With the Super Bowl being played Feb. 5, everyone is talking about the great season Atlanta Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan had and whether or not he can knock off the always-tough New England Patriots. Meanwhile, I'm looking ahead toward the NFL draft.

In my last column, I made a case for Clemson

quarterback Deshaun Watson as a top-10 consideration. As I continue to delve into the top prospects available, all the information points to one thing: this is going to be a great running back class.

Only three running backs have been taken in the first round over the past four drafts combined, with none in 2013 and 2014. However, there are at least four running backs that carry a first-round grade in this draft, and I could argue a fifth deserves consideration as well. While team needs will dictate just how many running backs end up being taken on day one this year, it seems likely that at least three will end up going in the first round. That hasn't happened since 2012.

Quantity is one thing, but there are three legitimate game-changing talents available this year. LSU's Leonard Fournette is the best prospect I've seen since Adrian Peterson came out in 2007, and Florida State's Dalvin Cook and Stanford's Christian McCaffrey are both incredible playmakers that will make an immediate impact at the next level.

Fournette missed six games this year with an ankle injury, but he's been the best runner in college football for the past three seasons. He scored 40 rushing touchdowns in his career at LSU, and ran for 1,953 yards as a sophomore.

Fournette has a rare blend of speed and power that makes him difficult to stop in short yardage situations, but is elusive enough to score any time he touches the ball. When all is said and done, he may end up being the best player in this draft at any position, and should soon become the best running back in the NFL.

Cook could be nearly as good. What he lacks in raw power, he more than makes up for with balance and vision. Plus, he has incredible speed and uses his strong lower body to push through would-be tacklers. Cook caught 33 passes last season for 488 yards and his natural ability as a receiver makes him a more versatile option than Fournette.

McCaffrey has a skillset reminiscent of former USC Trojan and second overall pick Reggie Bush. He has tremendous playmaking skills and can be lined up anywhere on the field. As a sophomore, McCaffrey rushed for 2,019 yards, caught 45 passes, and had 1,200 yards and a pair of touchdowns in the return game as well.

His lean frame might make it difficult for him to hold up as an every-down back, and cause concerns that he'll have the same durability issues Bush had as a pro, but there's no doubting his talent and his ability to change a game in the blink of an eye. Some team is going to fall in love with his skillset and it'll be shocking if he doesn't hear his name called on day one.

I also have a first round grade on Texas' D'Onta Foreman who had 2,028 yards last season and runs with a bruising style that compares favorably to New England's LeGarrette Blount. Additionally, I think Tennessee's Alvin Kamara and Ohio State's Curtis Samuel both have enough versatility to make them impact players at the next level.

While not all of these guys will get picked in the first round, three teams are going to get excellent runners with this trio. Oklahoma's Joe Mixon would probably get consideration in the first round as well, if not for a misdemeanor assault charge in 2014.

All in all, I expect up to eight to 10 backs to come off the board in the first three rounds, and at least six players to make an impact as early as next year. If that comes to fruition, this could be the best running back class in NFL history.

In my next column, I'll discuss the outcome of the Super Bowl, but for now, as a fan of a team sitting at home that weekend, I'm focused on the upcoming offseason and all the hope and changes it will inevitably bring.

Brandon Niles is a longtime fan of football and scotch, and has been writing about sports for the past decade. He is a fantasy football scout for 4for4 Fantasy Football and is co-bost of the 2 Guys Podcast.

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Big Horns topple Rebels 65-49

BY AMANDA EGGERT EBS SENIOR EDITOR

BIG SKY – Kolya Bough sparked Lone Peak's offense during their Jan. 27 home game by scoring the Big Horns' first four points. The sophomore point guard made one layup and turned a steal into another one in the first few minutes of the Big Horns' 65-49 win over Shields Valley.



Eddie Starz scored 35 points during Lone Peak's Jan. 27 game against Shields Valley. The senior guard came within four points of the record he set last year for most points scored in a game. PHOTO BY MILOSZ SHIPMAN

By the close of the first quarter, the Big Horns led 17-11 and they held on to that lead for the remainder of the game, growing it to as much as 23 points in the second half.

Senior guard Eddie Starz scored 35 points on the night. "It's always amazing with him," Lone Peak head coach Al Malinowski said. "He'll hit three or four layups, three of four jumpers, knock down a couple threes and hit 10 free throws—and you do the math and he comes out with 35 points."

The Rebels had an ace of their own in Sage McKinn, a post who sank six shots from inside the 3-point line and one from beyond it. Toss in his three-forfour shooting from the foul line and the lanky freshman ended the night with 18 points. "He'll be a tough one to stop in the future," said Malinowski of Shields Valley's leading scorer for the night.

Junior Jackson Wade and senior Bridger Babcock led the Big Horns on the boards with eight and seven rebounds from the paint, respectively. Lone Peak has been working on improving their rebounding stats by drawing more rebounds out of their guards.

"I always say the good rebounders are pessimists, they assume that the shot's going to be a miss," Malinowski said. "We're going to be outsized and we're not going to use that as an excuse. We're going to continue working hard."

Malinowski said he's been impressed with Babcock's performance this year, especially considering it's his first year of high school basketball and he sustained a serious knee injury playing football during his junior year. "The fact that he can do what he's doing now after going through that is pretty huge for us."

On Jan. 28, the Big Horns lost to Gardiner on the road, 91-64. They played another road game Jan. 31 against the Manhattan Christian Eagles and lost to the No. 1-ranked team 60-19. The Big Horns are ranked third in the district heading into the last two weeks of regular season play.

Lone Peak will play two home games in a row starting with a Friday, Feb. 3 game against Twin Bridges, followed by a matchup against White Sulphur Springs on Saturday. On Friday, Feb. 10 they'll play West Yellowstone at home, which will be the close of the Battle of 191 Food Drive and their last regular season game. All games start at 5:30 p.m.

Lady Big Horns clinch No. 1 ranking in overtime upset

BY AMANDA EGGERT EBS SENIOR EDITOR

BIG SKY – The Lady Big Horns avenged their Dec. 20 overtime loss to Shields Valley by defeating the Rebels 68-66 in a thrilling Jan. 27 home game.

The two teams, both boasting a 5-1 conference record heading into the

game, stayed in close contention through much of the first half. The Rebels ran a tough 1-2-2 press and guarded Big Horn leading scorer Luisa Locker doggedly.

"They lack in height, just like we do, but they make it up with hustling plays and aggressiveness," said Lone Peak head coach Nubia Allen of Shields Valley, one of the district's toughest teams.

Five minutes into the second quarter, the teams were tied at 19 when Locker, a senior point guard, sank a 3-pointer.

Sophomore guard Kodi Boersma followed it with a 3-pointer of her own to establish a six-point lead. Lone Peak widened it further with a pair of successful free throws by Jenna McKillop, a senior post who played an outstanding game.

But the Rebels rallied hard in the third quarter, and the two teams were tied at 40 heading into the fourth quarter.

The Big Horns were down by three points with 10 seconds left on the clock when senior guard Dasha Bough sank a 3-pointer to tie the game.



The Lady Big Horns celebrate their hotly contested Jan. 27 victory over the Shields Valley Rebels. Two clutch 3-pointers and a pair of free throws sealed Lone Peak's triumph. PHOTO BY RICH ADDICKS

In overtime, Lone Peak was down again when Luisa Locker sank her second 3-pointer of the night to tie the game once more. With seven seconds remaining, Allen was readying for a second overtime when the Rebels fouled McKillop. Lone Peak was in double-bonus, so McKillop was given two free-throw attempts.

She made both of them, sealing the Big Horns' win—and their No. 1 district ranking. Members of Lone Peak's boys' team and fans rushed the court to celebrate the outcome.

"I couldn't be prouder of the girls for pulling off this win," Allen said. "It was a tough one—they had to battle the whole game."

The Lady Big Horns followed that win with two more: a 56-9 road game against Gardiner on Jan. 28 and a 39-30 victory over Manhattan Christian on Jan. 31.

Lone Peak will play two home games in a row starting with a Friday, Feb. 3 game against Twin Bridges, and followed by a matchup against White Sulphur Springs on Saturday. On Friday, Feb. 10 they'll play rival West Yellowstone at home, which will be their last regular season game. All games start at 7 p.m.



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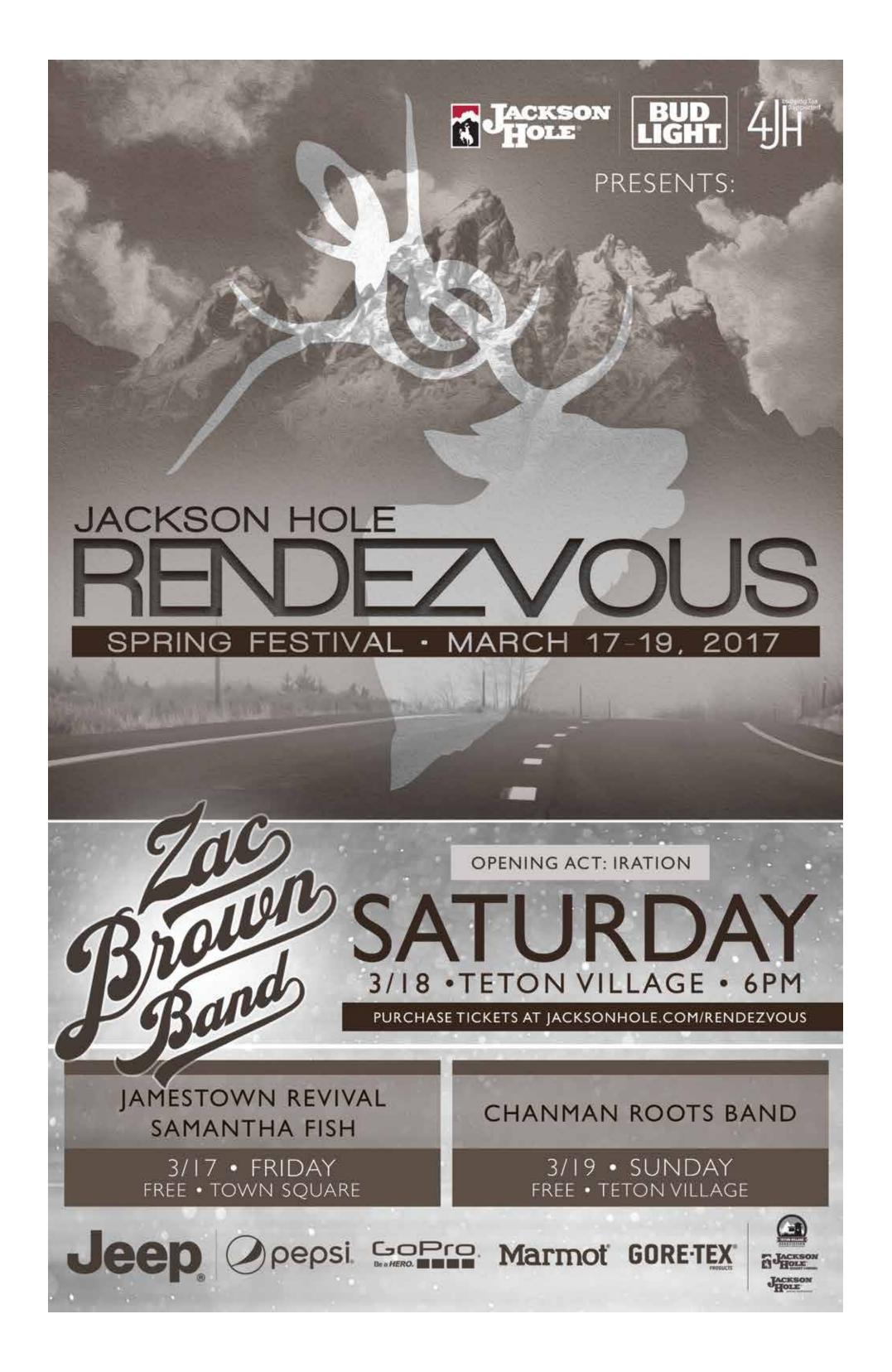




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Thumb injuries are common on the mountain and can be complicated



BY DR. JEFF DANIELS EBS MEDICAL COLUMNIST

The thumb is a very important part of the body and is critical when we do anything with our hands. It's particularly vulnerable to injury when skiing and snowboarding, as well as many other sports, because when we fall the thumb often leads the way to getting struck into the ground, icy hardpack, a rock or a tree.

The leading cause of surgery after a ski vacation is the repair of a ligament in the hand at the base of the thumb called the ulnar collateral ligament. This injury is often referred to as "skier's thumb." The ligament is most often torn by the grip on the handle of the ski pole, and that's why it's less common in snowboarders.

A person often tightens that grip while falling, and when the pole hits the ground it stretches the ligament until it breaks, sometimes even pulling out a small fragment of bone from the proximal phalanx of the thumb. This won't heal by itself and it requires surgery.

A much less common but more devastating injury that involves the thumb occurs where the hand bone of the thumb, the first metacarpal, joins with the wrist bone called the trapezium. There are two kinds of fractures at that carpometacarpal juncture, and both of them require surgery. We rarely see them, although during one week in January we had one of each.

A Bennett fracture is the less severe version of a fracture at this joint. Most of the Bennett fractures I've seen have been in skiers and snowboarders, and involve a direct blow to that part of the hand, usually against a rock. Only one fracture line is seen at the proximal end of the first metacarpal, the part of the hand bone closest to the wrist and furthest from the thumb. The fracture line has to extend into the joint that the first metacarpal makes with the trapezium in order for it to be a Bennett fracture.

Most Bennett fractures need surgery in order to ensure a normally functioning hand and thumb in the future. This first metacarpal-carpal joint is particularly vulnerable to arthritis as we get older, even if we've never had a fracture in that area. A poorly healed Bennett fracture is likely to cause arthritis at a much younger age.

A Rolando fracture is even worse. It involves the same area of the proximal first metacarpal, but the fracture lines are multiple and always require surgery. The results of surgery are often less than perfect, so a Rolando fracture often ends up with a chronically arthritic thumb early on.

MSU researcher receives \$1.3 million to develop virus-fighting technology

BY MARSHALL SWEARINGEN *msu news service*

BOZEMAN - A Montana State University researcher and her colleagues have received a \$5.2 million grant to push the boundaries of a new approach for treating flu and other fast-evolving viruses that resist traditional vaccines.

Connie B. Chang, assistant professor in the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering, will receive \$1.3 million of the funding, which was awarded in October by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), an independent agency of the U.S. Department of Defense that funds "high-risk, high-reward" projects.

Chang and her team will explore the use of a sophisticated method called dropbased microfluidics for producing therapeutic interfering particles, or TIPs, for treating influenza.

"Once we understand how this applies to flu, we could potentially use this method to make TIPs for other viruses," Chang said. DARPA lists more than 40 "high priority viral pathogens," including Ebola, HIV and Zika, as candidates for treatment using TIPs.

TIPs are stripped-down, harmless versions of viruses. While traditional vaccines consist of a weakened or killed virus that prompts the body's immune system to produce antibodies, TIPs are engineered to hijack a harmful virus's reproduction process, creating more TIPs while reducing the ability of the virus to spread and cause illness.

TIPs are thought to have several potential advantages over vaccines, including an ability to co-evolve with the harmful virus and remain effective for longer periods.

Microfluidics "is a powerful tool" that shows promise for producing TIPs, Chang said, because it allows researchers to cultivate millions of strains of viruses in a highly controlled environment, at lower cost and with smaller lab requirements.

"Chang's work is helping to enable experiments, using microfluidics, that used to require entire rooms full of researchers and equipment," said Jeff Heys, head of MSU's Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering.

Microfluidics technology involves manipulating microscopic drops of water and oil using networks of tiny tubes etched in palm-sized plates of glass, called "chips." A single microfluidics chip can be used to produce millions of drops per minute.

Individual host cells infected with a virus are inserted into each of the drops. As the virus multiplies and evolves independently in each of the drops, millions of new virus strains are produced, according to Chang.

"We can then screen these viruses at rates of thousands per second" to determine their genetic makeup, Chang said. The drops containing the viral strains that show promise for further adaptation into TIPs can then theoretically be rapidly sorted out, she added.

It's important to make a diagnosis, stabilize, and get an orthopedic consultation within a week of injury, if either of these fractures occurs. These two injuries will get people into the medical clinic right off the mountain, whereas a skier's thumb injury, especially if no fracture occurs, will often be shaken off and dealt with much later.

At the Medical Clinic of Big Sky, we use a bracing system to stabilize these fractures and ligament tears, and especially for the skier's thumb injury, we can make skiing for the rest of the vacation safer and less painful, with the admonition that surgery is necessary upon returning home.

Dr. Jeff Daniels was the recipient of the 2016 Big Sky Chamber of Commerce Chet Huntley Lifetime Achievement Award and has been practicing medicine in Big Sky since 1994, when he and his family moved here from New York City. A unique program he implements has attracted more than 700 medical students and young doctors to train with the Medical Clinic of Big Sky. Chang, whose Soft Matter and Microfluidics Lab is part of MSU's Center for Biofilm Engineering, played a major role in developing microfluidics as a tool for virology with funding from another DARPA grant as a postdoctoral scholar at Harvard University, before coming to MSU in 2013 and taking a tenure-track position in 2015.

"DARPA is well-known for funding the most cutting-edge research," Heys said.

According to DARPA, the agency has played a major role in developing handheld GPS devices, flat-screen technology and the basis of the modern Internet.

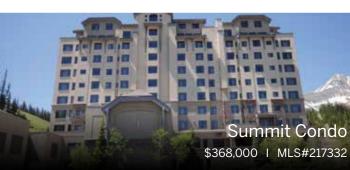
"The research is fast-paced and interdisciplinary," said Chang, who is one of the five principal investigators on the project, which includes Christopher Brooke of University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Ruian Ke of North Carolina State University, Katia Koelle of Duke University and Laura Fabris of Rutgers University. The other principal investigators are experts in virology, mathematics, evolutionary biology and materials science.

"These are challenging concepts," Chang said. "We're aiming for something that could seem impossible. But with DARPA, they want you to try these high-risk, high-reward projects."



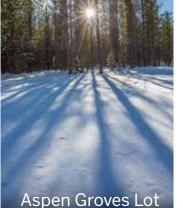


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BY JACKIE RAINFORD CORCORAN EBS HEALTH COLUMNIST

This is part three of a three part series where I share my experiences of following the Whole30 with you. Be prepared for the good the bad and the ugly.

First, a quick recap: the Whole30 is a concept developed by Dallas and Melissa Hartwig. In their book, "It Starts With Food: Discover the Whole30 and Change Your

Life in Unexpected Ways" the Hartwigs lay out a concise and sustainable 30-day nutritional plan.

The plan includes vegetables, fruits, meat and healthy fats. It eliminates refined packaged foods, whole grains, legumes, dairy, alcohol and sugar, as the Hartwigs believe these potentially cause inflammation in the body.

Due to EBS publishing deadlines, I'm writing this article before the completion of the Whole30, but I'm happy to tell you that my husband and I feel terrific and are in no hurry for it to end.

For those interested in following this plan, I'd like to share the challenges along with the rewards so you can fully prepare yourself.

Eating whole foods at every meal for 30 days—that's 90 meals per person—requires one of our most valuable resources: time. Time management and preparation are vital. Fortunately, there are many online sites devoted to the Whole30 that offer timesaving hacks.

Don't do it for weight loss. While many people do lose weight due to the elimination of excess carbohydrates and calories, that's not the main focus of this endeavor—your scale should be tucked away for the duration. The intention is to

Why I love January, part 3

get us out of a diet mindset and instead focus on how our bodies and minds feel. That said, my tummy hasn't been this flat in years and my energy levels are way up.

Attending social events can be a challenge. The Hartwigs want everyone to experience "food freedom" and would argue that cloistering ourselves away is the opposite of that. But if you and your peers don't usually eat this way together and drinking alcohol is the norm, it might require patience and practice to feel fully at ease. However, waking up on a Sunday without the trace of a headache is well worth it effort.

Unless you already follow a paleo diet, you'll have to get creative in the kitchen. While this is great fun for someone who loves to cook, for those who don't, consider enlisting a friend or family member to do it with you so they can share the responsibility.

Eating out offers endless temptations but is possible at many restaurants. Recently at Ted's Montana Grill in Bozeman, my husband enjoyed a gorgeous beef tenderloin, baked potato with bacon and sliced tomatoes.

Completing the Whole30 is not the end of the journey, and in some ways it's just the beginning. With a well laid out plan, the Hartwigs ask that you bring foods back in a systematic way, one food group at a time, and then go back to the Whole30 for two days and notice how the body responds. I'm looking forward to the experience with curiosity and enthusiasm.

While all this might sound overwhelming and complicated, it's really not. It's actually quite simple and, dare I say, fun. It's in alignment with author and filmmaker Michael Pollan's adage, "If it came from a plant, eat it; if it was made in a plant, don't."

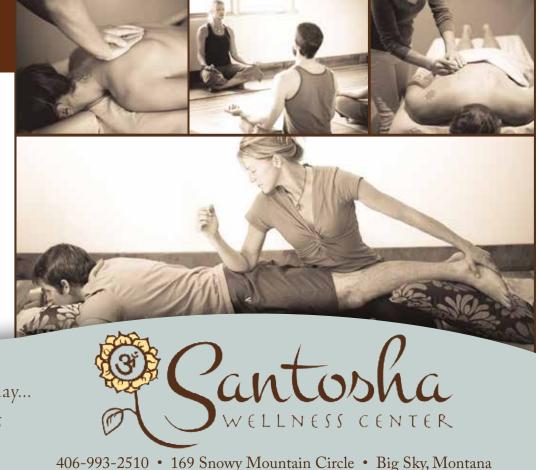
Change is challenging but in that challenge, growth and good health are waiting for us. I love that January inspired this change in us.

Jackie Rainford Corcoran is an IIN Certified Holistic Health Coach and Consultant, a public speaker and bealth activist. Contact her at jackie@corehealthmt.com.

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Interested in helping shape the future of parks and trails here in Big Sky? The Big Sky Community Organization is hiring a FT Project Manager to lead all aspects of construction, land management and recreation projects as a critical member of the leadership team. For more information and to apply visit: www.bscomt.org/employment-opportunities



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Seeking individual or couple for live-in full-time employment. Free rent plus salary, spectacular views from just completed one bedroom apartment overlooking the Spanish Peak range. The apartment is within a stand-alone building. The property is a compound within one of the Big Sky Clubs. It includes an equestrian component. The family spends approximately 190 days a year in Big Sky. While the family is on property hours would be long, while not on property, much more flexibility. The family is typically in residence primarily between Dec 15 -- April 5 and between July 1 -- Oct 15. Pleasant attitude and attention to detail are key. Duties and Responsibilities include: -Run snow plowing equipment, shoveling snow, maintain exterior lighting and seasonal adjustments, setting up exterior lighting for Christmas and take down, power washing driveway, washing cars, airport pick ups, car maintenance coordination, seasonal switch out of tires, mail pick up and drop off, grocery shopping, weed control, feeding horses, coordinating wood for fires, party set up and clean up, daily housekeeping, heavy laundry, ironing, vacuum and mopping floors, closet organization, general assistant work, meal prep, handyman work. If interested, please email resume/qualifications to bmahaffy@ pennrose.com or call 1-267-386-8693



LEGAL

AUDIT PUBLICATION STATEMENT

An audit of the affairs of Big Sky Fire Department has been conducted by Holmes & Turner (a professional corporation). The audit covered the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016.

Section 2-7-521, MCA, requires the publication concerning the audit report include a statement that the audit report is on file in its entirety and open to public inspection. This report is available to the public at 650 Rainbow Trout Run, Big Sky, MT 59716 or at www.bigskyfire.org (Home Page/About BSFD/ Annual Reports/2016 Audited Annual Financial Report). Big Sky Fire Department will send a copy of the audit report to any interested person upon request.

Sincerely,

Big Sky Fire Department



bigskylibrary.org

Announcements

Toddler Storytime Monday 2/6 and 2/13 10:30 A.M.

hours. Sunday 1-5p.m. Monday 10a.m.-6p.m. (Toddlers Storytime 10:30 a.m.) Tuesday 4-8p.m. Wednesday 4-8p.m. Closed Thursday-Saturday

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AMUSE-BOUCHE

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

'I'm your huckleberry'



BY SCOTT MECHURA **EBS FOOD COLUMNIST**

The huckleberry: Yet another food item whose identification and nomenclature has been changed or lost in translation from culture to culture, particularly from old England. The term huckleberry encompasses a wide range of berries from all over the world. Not all of these berries are truly huckleberries, but historically

it's difficult to know exactly what is.

We associate these deep blue, almost purple, berries with all things Montana. Go to any tourist store from Glacier to Yellowstone national parks and you'll probably see shelves lined with huckleberry jam or jelly. I don't know how much is sold annually in the state, but I'm sure it's quite a bit.

Growing as abundantly in Idaho, the huckleberry is their state fruit— Montana doesn't have a state fruit. Interestingly, plant breeders in Idaho have been trying to domesticate the huckleberry for more than a century with very limited success.

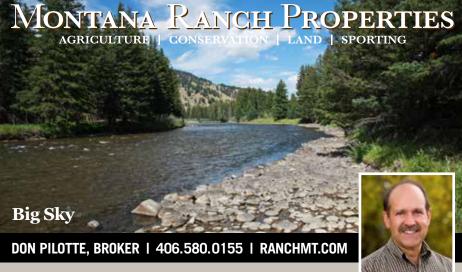
Varieties of huckleberries thrive in all parts of the nation, as well as in Canada, Western Europe and Scandinavia. The species may change slightly from continent to continent, but they are all derived from the same Ericaceae family. Like the Old World/New World confusion over the terms elk, deer and moose, as I recently wrote about in EBS, American colonists misidentified huckleberries as a blueberry.

Originally called "hurtleberry," settlers used this term to refer to a wide variety of small blue, red or black berries. It has taken some time sorting out all the etymology, and it still confuses most people.

From central California to British Columbia we have the red huckleberry. And while Californians do harvest and eat them, they're not marketed as extensively as the Montana huckleberry is.

Yet another type of huckleberry grows in most of the South all the way to Florida. Not surprisingly, they refer to it as the Confederate huckleberry. And most people in the South believe our dark purple huckleberry, the Cascade huckleberry, to actually be a variety of blueberry.

In the Scandinavian countries of Sweden and Norway, as well as in Finland and extreme northwest Russia, they enjoy what is known as a cloudberry. While working at Aquavit Minneapolis, our pastry chef Adrian would use these little red berries often and we had them shipped directly from Sweden. With some questioning on my part, I found out that they're also referred to as





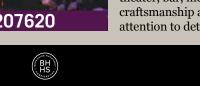


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DEPARTING

8:20a / 8:35a / 9:35a / 10:35a / 11:35a / 12:35p

huckleberries in Sweden.

Now, let's muddy the waters even more. While most institutions agree that this family of berries is native to South America, the two governing bodies of etymology do not align. The Germplasm Resources Information Network, or GRIN, and the USDA Plants Database do not agree on how many recognized North American native species there are, at seven versus eight, respectively.

So now the question you're asking is just how do I tell a variety of blueberry from the multitude of huckleberries. Experts will tell you to look at the seeds. Blueberries typically have a random amount of many small soft seeds, while a huckleberry always has 10 crunchy seeds.

With their generally high anti-oxidant properties, depending on the fruit, I love nearly every berry. Whether it's from Sweden or Western Europe, Montana or Florida, just enjoy anything anyone calls a huckleberry.

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

TOWN CENTER

1:35p / 2:35p / 3:35p / 4:35p / 5:35p / 6:35p 7:35p / 8:35p / 9:45p / 10:35p / 11:35p / 1:35a

ARRIVING **MOUNTAIN VILLAGE**

8:35a / 9:00a / 10:00a / 10:55a / 12:00p / 12:55p 2:00p / 2:55p / 4:00p / 4:55p / 5:55p / 6:55p 7:55p / 8:55p / 10:15p / 10:55p / 11:55p / 1:55a

Mountain Village to Town Center Bus Schedule Heading Down

DEPARTING **MOUNTAIN VILLAGE**

7:10a / 8:35a / 9:10a / 10:10a / 11:10a 12:10p / 1:10p / 2:10p / 3:10p / 4:10p 5:10p / 6:10p / 7:10p / 8:10p / 9:10p 10:15p / 11:15p / 12:15a / 2:15a

ARRIVING **TOWN CENTER** 7:25a / 8:50a *w / 9:35a / 10:35 a / 11:35a / 12:35p 1:35p / 2:35p / 3:35p / 4:35p / 5:35p / 6:35p / 7:35p 8:35p / 9:35p / 10:35p / 11:35p / 12:35a / 2:35a

*w = whistle stop

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OUTDOORS

BACK 40

Section 3: OUTDOORS, FUN,

Word from the Resorts pg. 35



Feb. 3 - 16, 2017 **33**

LOD







EBS STAFF

2016 was another record-breaking year for visitation in Yellowstone National Park. The park tallied a total of 4.25 million visits this past year, a 3.9 percent increase from 2015 when nearly 4.1 million people visited the park and a whopping 21percent increase over 2014 numbers.

National park visitation was strong in Montana and Wyoming throughout the National Park Service's centennial. Glacier National Park to the north of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park to its south also posted record years. 2016 was the third consecutive year that both parks set visitation records.

One of the most notable trends in recent years is the marked increase of commercial tour buses entering Yellowstone's gates. In 2016, nearly 13,000 commercial bus tours were counted, a 21 percent increase over 2015 entries and a 46.5 percent increase from 2014 figures. Park management is currently considering options for commercial tour bus management.

Although the park does not include visitor nationality in its statistics, it's significant that the park hired three interpretive rangers who speak Mandarin Chinese last year.

Yellowstone spokeswoman Linda Veress said unexpectedly high visitation in 2015 led the park to make changes in 2016 that included increased signage in multiple languages, more bathroom facilities in high-use areas and the creation of the Yellowstone Pledge, a 10-point standard of conduct designed to protect Yellowstone's resources and keep visitors safe.

The Yellowstone Pledge directs people to refrain from approaching wildlife to take selfies; stay on boardwalks in thermal areas; and travel safely in bear country by carrying bear spray, making noise and hiking in groups.

Veress said she expects the increased visitation trend will continue into 2017.

Yellowstone looks to expand telecommunications bandwidth in park Public comment sought on proposal

BY AMANDA EGGERT **EBS SENIOR EDITOR**

Yellowstone National Park is seeking comments from the public on a proposed project to construct an antenna-mounting structure at the Mount Washburn Fire Lookout that would improve poor telecommunications services in developed areas of the park. The plan also calls for the addition and replacement of telecommunications infrastructure at Old Faithful, Grant Village, Yellowstone Lake and Canyon Village.

Bret De Young, branch chief of telecommunications in the park, said the plan won't increase coverage area, but it would increase capacity at developed areas of the park.

"The [current] capacity is so low in Yellowstone at those interior sites that people just get blocked calls ... There's a lot of people trying to use a very small amount of bandwidth," De Young said.

De Young said the current infrastructure handled older generation flip phones pretty well, but with visitors using smart phones to look at maps, make reservations, download park-specific apps and check weather, the system quickly becomes overloaded.

According to a NPS press release, the project would improve safety for park workers and visitors; reduce the number of antennas attached to the exterior of the historic fire lookout; and increase the availability of cellular telecommunications that currently limits park operations and visitor experience.

Park officials say the proposal is consistent with the 2008 Wireless Communications Services Plan, a document developed to guide the future of wireless communications in Yellowstone. The proposed changes would be implemented in a way that would limit spillover into backcountry areas of the park, according to the release.

At Mount Washburn, the plan calls for the relocation multiple antennas currently attached to the historic fire lookout to the new mounting structure; the construction of new underground vaults to conceal new point-to-point microwave antennas; the replacement of an offsite diesel generator with a propane generator; and the relocation

"During the busiest times of the year, visitation levels in the park have led to long lines, traffic congestion, diminishing visitor experiences, and impacts on park resources," said Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk in a press release. "It's our job to recognize the trend, how it's affecting this magnificent park, understand our visitors, and what we may need to do to protect Yellowstone for future generations. All options are on the table."

This past August, the park conducted social science studies to better understand visitors including their demographics, experiences, opinions and preferences. The data will help park managers make decisions that reflect the experiences and needs of visitors both in the present and in the future. The results of the study are expected this spring.

Taking a longer view, the growth of visitation over the last century is impressive. One hundred years ago, shortly after automobile travel was first permitted in Yellowstone, approximately 36,000 visitors came to the park. Fifty years ago in 1966, the park saw 2.13 million visits. Since that time, visitation has grown 99.8 percent.

of old buried electrical service with new electrical service.

De Young said the new infrastructure at Mount Washburn would also support the land radios Yellowstone rangers use for communication. The lookout was never built for the antennas that are currently installed on the structure, he added.

The trail to Mount Washburn would remain open, although the fire lookout and the restroom would be closed at points during the construction.

At Canyon Village, the plan calls for the installation of a new tower at the existing telecommunication site. The tower there—as well as towers that would be installed at Grant Village and Yellowstone Lake if the plan is approved—would support point-topoint microwave antennas.

Public comments will be collected until March 2 at parkplanning.nps.gov/ mtwashburn. Drawings and three-dimensional images of the proposed project are posted on this site and provide more details.

A Categorical Exclusion would be prepared for any changes requiring additional National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance. Yellowstone is also consulting with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office on the proposed design.

OUTDOORS

Seasons of Jack Creek lecture series continues Feb. 8

EBS STAFF

The Seasons of Jack Creek lecture series continues at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, with a presentation by Dr. Jay Rotella at Lone Mountain Ranch. Rotella is a professor in the Ecology Department at Montana State University.

Rotella's talk "Conservation Status and Life History of Antarctica's Weddell Seal: Insights from 40 years of Study," will describe insights gained from four decades of studying the world's southernmost mammal.

The breeding population of Weddell seals in the Ross Sea's Erebus Bay has been intensively monitored and much has been learned about the lives of individual animals that live in the most pristine marine environment on earth.

The Seasons of Jack Creek lecture series provides educational programming and an avenue for students and faculty at Montana State University to share their knowledge and research with the community. Lectures and events will be hosted throughout the year in Big Sky, Ennis, Bozeman and at the Jack Creek Preserve.

The price of the Feb. 8 lecture includes wine, beer and hors d'oeuvres. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged at jackcreekpreserve. org/events. For more information, contact Jack Creek Preserve Executive Director Sarah Tilt at sarab@jackcreekpreserve.org.

Nordic Hot Tub

How Big Sky gets into hot water



Canadians given jail time for violations at parks across the US West

BY MATTHEW BROWN AND MATT VOLZ ASSOCIATED PRESS

BILLINGS (AP) - Three Canadians will be banned from federal lands for five years after pleading guilty to walking on a sensitive hot spring in Yellowstone National Park and other crimes at parks across the Western U.S., park officials said Thursday.

Charles Gamble, Alexey Lyakh and Justis Price Brown pleaded guilty during a hearing before U.S. Magistrate Judge Mark Carman at the Yellowstone Justice Center, officials said.

The men were from the group High on Life SundayFundayz. An investigation last spring into the group's travels revealed violations of park rules at Yellowstone, Zion, Death Valley and Mesa Verde national parks and Utah's Corona Arch and Bonneville Salt Flats.

The defendants also used drones in closed areas, rode bikes in a wilderness area and took commercial photographs without a permit, according to authorities.

In addition to being banned from public lands, Gamble and Lyakh were ordered to serve a week in jail and pay more than \$2,000 in fines, restitution and community service payments. Brown agreed to fines and payments of more than \$3,500, officials said.

Two other men—Hamish Cross and Parker Heuser—pleaded guilty in the case in November.

The defendants posted video and selfies of their travels on social media. Several are from Vancouver, British Columbia, and have a clothing line that they promote.

Gamble's attorney, Alex Rate, said his client and friends had been threatened and shamed on social media for what amounted to making bad decisions on a road trip. Their aim was to inspire people to explore the parks, and any money they made from the videos they posted was minuscule, Rate said.

"These young men have been through the wringer when it comes to public shaming," Rate said. "They understand the impact of their decisions and take responsibility for it."

Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk said in a statement that the penalties handed down Thursday "send a strong and poignant message about thermal feature protection and safety."

An Oregon man died last June when he left a designated boardwalk and fell into a scalding hot spring at Yellowstone.

Trapper education course slated for Feb. 18

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A free trapper education class is scheduled in Bozeman on Saturday, Feb. 18 at the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Regional Headquarters. All are welcome to attend, but advance registration is required and an adult must accompany youth under 12 years of age.

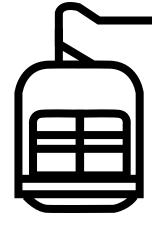
The class will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. with an hour break for lunch. Topics will include trapping equipment, trap setting, ethics, rules and regulations, furbearer identification, and fur handling.

The Montana Trappers Association and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks are sponsoring the class.

Participants will receive a certificate of completion, the Montana Trappers Association trapping handbook, and other informational material.

Please be aware this class does not certify participants for Montana's wolf trapping season. All would-be wolf trappers needed to complete a formal wolf trapping certification class.

Contact Brian Stoner at (406) 581-8583 to register. Questions can also be directed to Fran Buell with the Montana Trappers Association at education@montanatrappers.org and Claire Gower with FWP at cgower@mt.gov.



WORD FROM THE RESORTS

Giving you the news directly from the region's top ski resorts



BY CHELSI MOY public relations manager at big sky resort

The resort saw some amazing blue bird days during the last full week of January. Our maintenance crews have been out in force making perfect corduroy groomers on about 1,100 acres, including the new Steep and Deep black-diamond run in The Bowl. Guests can't stop raving about the five-minute Bowl laps thanks to our brand new Powder

Seeker high-speed chairlift with a ride time of just three minutes. Now with Steep and Deep, get ready to really increase the number of runs tallied in a day!

There is no such thing as a dumb idea when it comes to Dummy Jump! This Saturday, Feb. 4, launch a dummy off a jump and watch it soar through the air. Registration is free, as well as the many laughs you'll surely enjoy. Contestants will be judged on their dummy's structure, amplitude, destruction, length of flight, creativity, appearance, and much more. The prizes have increased this year! Don't wait to gather your friends and build a dummy that will out-last and out-class the competition.

Need some Dummy Jump hints? Crash landings earn you points, use long straight skis, and keep the dummy's center of gravity low to the ground. For more information and hints, visit bigskyresort.com/dummyjump.

It's not too early to start thinking about Big Sky Big Grass, which takes the stage at Big Sky Resort Feb. 9 – 11. Get ready to tap your toe and kick up your heels to the music of Sam Bush, Del McCoury Band, Billy Strings, Drew Emmitt Band and many more! Tickets are still on sale.

Visit bigskyresort.com/biggrass for more information.



The Bridger Gully Freeride competition returns to Bridger Bowl on Saturday, Feb. 18, where skiers and snowboarders are judged on one run through some of the ski area's most challenging ridge terrain. Participants are scored on criteria including degree of difficulty, control, fluidity and aggressiveness, among others.

The event is limited to 60 competitors, aged 16 and older, and there is a mandatory 8 a.m. check-in and competitors' meeting at FaceShots in the Jim Bridger Lodge. Pre-registration is required by noon on Friday, Feb. 17 and the competition begins at 10:30 a.m. on Feb. 18.

BY JENNIE WHITE grand targhee resort marketing and social media manager

It's February and that means it's time to go cat skiing! If you dream about powder turns, then a day on the cat is just what you need. Your full day adventure starts at 8:30 a.m. when you meet your guides and fellow skiers or riders. Next you'll head to the top of Sacajawea chairlift and hop in the cat for your first



run. The cat will sweep you away to the top of Peaked Mountain, where you'll be dropped off to enjoy your first run filled with powder.

Throughout the day our professional guides will tour you through open bowls and gladed tree runs. After each run the cat will pick you up at the bottom and take you back to the top! You'll break for lunch and refuel on sandwiches, homemade soups, and fresh baked brownies and cookies. By the end of the day you'll be ready for a cold drink at the Trap Bar & Grill because your legs will be powdered out. Grab 12 of your closest friends and enjoy a private day on the mountain—if you rent the whole cat, you'll get a discount.

Your adventure at Grand Targhee Resort includes so much more than just skiing and snowboarding. Enjoy a guided snowshoe or ski tour with our resort naturalist, who will teach you about local flora and fauna and then enjoy a sleigh ride dinner. Want more options? Book a massage, take a fat bike for a spin, soak in the heated outdoor saltwater pool and hot tub, go tubing, enjoy the Rocky Mountain menu at the Branding Iron Grill, or catch some great après music at the Trap Bar & Grill. Break away and enjoy some of the best snow in Wyoming! We'll see you on the mountain.

Visit grandtarghee.com for more information.

BY DAVID JOHNSON marketing at jackson hole mountain resort



Another week, another storm delivers here in Jackson Hole. The most recent storm dropped 26 inches of "cowboy

pow" here in the Tetons and throughout the valley. Our winter to remember continues and the folks living in and visiting Jackson Hole have been all smiles. Conditions from top to bottom have been great and our groomed runs remain phenomenal.

We've got exciting events coming up in February that you won't want to miss. The weekend of Feb. 4, the Powder 8 Grand Nationals return to Cody Bowl, where competitors from all over will link turns with a partner in hopes of being crowned Powder 8 Champs. It is a spectacle and certainly a sight to see. The following weekend, cowboys and skiers return to Jackson Hole to compete in skijoring, a historic favorite at JHMR. This event takes place across the street from the resort at the Snake River Ranch.

The biggest remaining date on the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort calendar looms in March, when the Rendezvous Spring Festival returns with the Zac Brown Band headlining it once again. The weekend of March 18, acts like Jamestown Revival, Samantha Fish, Yonder Mountain String Band and Iration will play the Tetons. Most of these concerts are free, except for the Yonder Mountain String Band and the Zac Brown Band concert on Saturday, March 18.

If there is low visibility prior to the competition start, the event will be postponed to Sunday, Feb. 19. This is a great opportunity for spectators to watch some of Bridger's best shredders attack the legendary ridge terrain. *– Tyler Allen*



BY DENISE WADE LONE MOUNTAIN RANCH DIRECTOR OF GUEST OPERATIONS

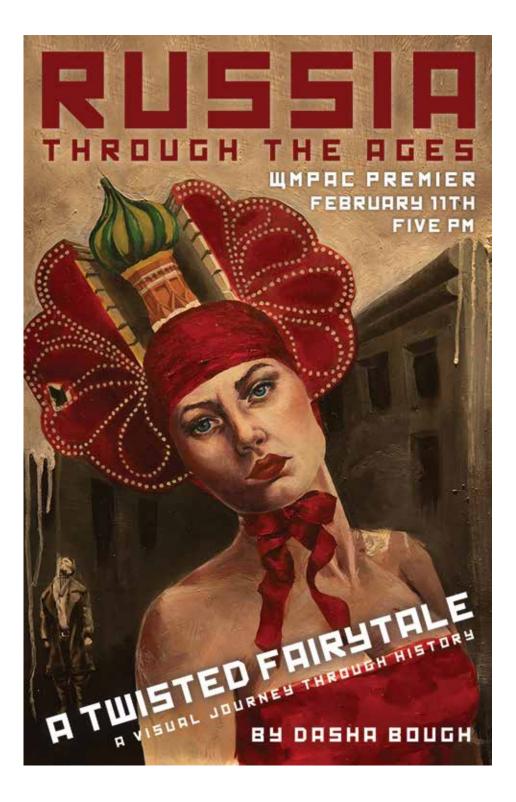
Grab your cross-country skis or skate skis and come ski
 LMR's fabulous conditions. Our grooming team has been meticulously grooming to make the trails terrific for both classic and skate skiing. It doesn't get any better than this!

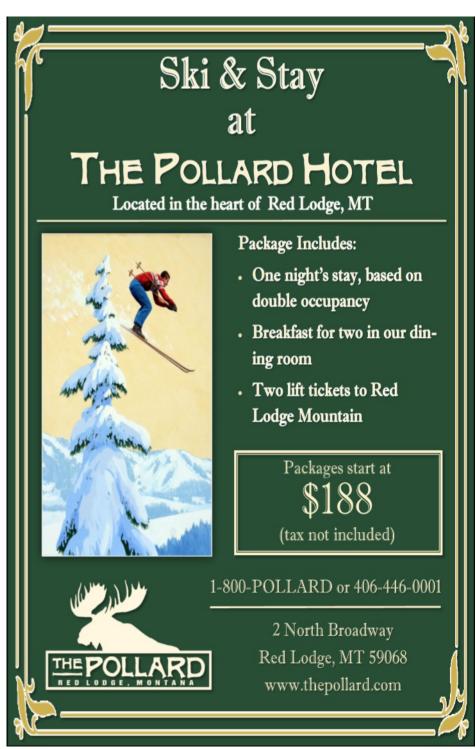
This winter we are hosting the second annual 5@5 Discovery Academy Town Series. Nearly 50 participants raced in the first event in January. The second of three races is coming up on Feb. 9. Come join us and race with your friends. The 5@5 races are fun citizen races that start at 5 p.m. For \$5, adults can race a 5-kilometer loop around the Town Center trails. Kids can race on a 1 kilometer or 3 kilometer course, also starting at 5 p.m. Registration begins at 4 p.m.

For tickets and information, visit jacksonbole.com/rendezvous.

Feb. 25 marks the second annual Mad Wolf Winter Relay. Lone Mountain Ranch has partnered with Big Sky Resort and Big Sky Ski Education Foundation to host a multi-disciplined race with all proceeds going toward youth ski programs. Race as an individual or as a team. This year we've added a running component to the event for four total legs of the race. Start on Andesite and ski down Hangman's, run from the bottom of Hangman's across the base area to the bottom of Low Dog Road, cross-country ski down to Lone Mountain Ranch tunnel, and bike to the finish! Afterwards, join the party—complete with prizes, awards and music by the Hooligans—at LMR from 4-6 p.m. Check it out on our Facebook events page.

And don't forget to join our locals clinics held Wednesdays and Saturdays. See you on the trails!





Montana tales and trails: Life in Winter

BY BRUCE AUCHLY montana fish wildlife and parks information and education manager

When the temperature reaches far below zero, we often think of the outside as the dead zone. Plants and mammals are asleep. Birds have flown south. Yes, there are exceptions, but generally we equate winter's long nights and cold temperatures with death.

Here's a wake-up call: Nature in winter is alive. Whether in the woods, on the prairie, or right smack downtown, life is teeming even when we don't see it.

Let's start where it's obvious: the bird feeder in the yard. In town you may see small birds, mostly house sparrows and finches, eating bird seed and surviving. Meanwhile, lurking in the bushes nearby might be a sharp-shinned hawk, looking to snare a careless sparrow.

Depending on your town, gray squirrels and cottontail rabbits could be scurrying about trying to avoid the neighbor's house cat. And if it's night, the rabbits and cats are both in the sights of a great horned owl.

Which brings us to love in the cold.

As we enter February, great horned owls will be breeding. All that hooting you hear at night isn't just the local owls harmonizing for fun. They're looking for mates. After mating, the owls will continue to hoot, not so much to proclaim their love and affection, but to stake out a territory and warn other owls away.

Bald eagles also mate and lay eggs during the winter. By the end of February, many Montana eagles are sitting on eggs. Eagles and owls mate and lay eggs in the winter because it takes so long to raise their young. The mature birds teach their young to hunt in the summer when prey is abundant and easier to catch.

The cycle of life and death continues on the prairie under a blanket of snow. Various rodent species are about looking for seeds to eat, while close behind might lurk a least weasel wanting to feast on a morsel of mouse meat.

On top of the snow, coyotes sit and listen for the sound of a meadow vole running around. The hearing of coyotes is so acute that they can pounce on and capture a rodent underneath the snow without ever seeing it.

And cruising just above the prairie will be a rough-legged hawk, a winter resident from the far north, looking for that same rodent. It's tough to be mouse.

Insects are mostly dead or asleep in their larval stage, but honeybees, which are not native to North America, are very much alive clustered in a man-made hive or perhaps an old tree.

Another insect very much alive in the winter woods is the snow flea. On a mild, sunny winter day, you may come upon a patch of snow that looks like someone spilled a can of black pepper. Closer inspection will reveal a tiny insect jumping about. It's the snow flea, also known as a springtail. While harmless to us, this minute insect, which lives under leaves and on tree bark, performs its civic duty by eating organic debris on the forest floor.

Of course, these daily cycles also play out on the forest floor as carnivores both winged and on foot look for rodents or hares to eat.

And you thought nothing was going on outside today.



On the Trail: Sluice Box

Explore local hiking, biking and equestrian trails with Big Sky Community Organization's trail series.



Mike (left) and Sawyer Wolfe ski Sluice Box, a 6-kilometer cross-country located on Lone Mountain Ranch. PHOTO BY CIARA WOLFE

BY CIARA WOLFE BSCO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Skiing the Sluice Box trail provides an excellent aerobic workout and peaceful scenery from start to finish. Cross-country skiers start the 6-kilometer loop by heading north from the Lone Mountain Ranch Outdoor Shop on the northwest side of the parking lot. Approximately 1/2 of a kilometer out, you'll come to your first marked intersection. Follow the signs for Sluice Box and take a left.

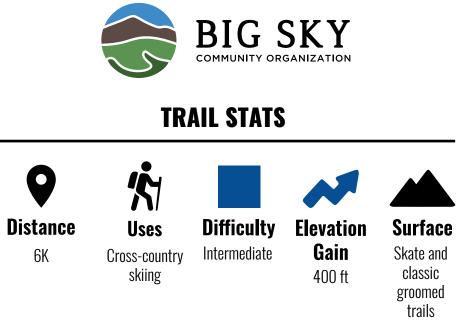
The trail then begins a gradual climb that starts at the creek bed and continues until you reach a forested plateau. At the top of the snow-covered plateau, you'll cross two small roads with minimal traffic and continue a steady S-turn climb for approximately 1 more kilometer. At this intersection take a right toward Mountain View ski trail and soon after take a left onto Sluice Box. This loop is a curving 1.6-kilometer climb through beautiful, open lodgepole pine forest. At the top of the loop, you'll begin 1.8 kilometers of gradual, curvy descent.

Throughout the entire downhill, you can be confident you won't unexpectedly encounter an uphill skier, as this is a one-way loop that is well marked. After finishing the loop, you'll return to the second intersection you navigated through on your ski uphill. From this point, follow the same trail down that you skied up all the way back to the Outdoor Shop. After skiing hard on the way up, you'll get to enjoy a long, fun ski back. You can follow your ski with a visit to Lone Mountain Ranch's Saloon for a small bite to eat, meal with friends, or warm drink by the fire.

Lone Mountain Ranch is located just off Highway 64 approximately 4.5 miles west of its intersection with Highway 191. After you pass through Town Center, you'll begin your climb toward the peak and see the Lone Mountain Ranch sign and driveway on your right. The Outdoor Shop and parking lot can be found on your left about half of a mile up the road. You can purchase an annual season pass or a day pass (\$20/day) there. All proceeds from pass sales go toward the cost of grooming our winter Nordic trail system. For a complete map of Big Sky's 85 kilometers of groomed Nordic trails, visit lonemountainranch.com/winter-things-to-do/nordic-skiing.

For more information about Big Sky's parks, trails and recreation programs, visit bscomt.org. The Big Sky Community Organization is a local nonprofit that connects people to recreational opportunities by acquiring, promoting and preserving sustainable places and programs for all.





Directions: From Gallatin Canyon/Highway 191, turn west on Highway 64. Drive approximately 4.5 miles and turn right at the Lone Mountain Ranch sign. The parking lot is located another 1/2 of a mile up the road.





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BY PATRICK STRAUB EBS FISHING COLUMNIST

Few, if any, places on earth harbor miles of trout streams as densely as this small radius that we call home. Many people moved here for that reason, and for others like myself who grew up here, the area's trout water has kept us here. And what has kept me here, able to carve out a pretty special lifestyle as a guide, has been sharing our waters and their trout with others.

seeing the

same ones over

and over again.

Here's what

makes them great.

Work ethic. Yes, you read that correct. The best fishing guides have a tireless work ethic. They spend time on the water

when others

are at the bar or playing

Whether you loathe it, love it, or could go either way, living alongside fly-fishing guides is a part of reality in southwest Montana. There is a false perception shared by many people when they see three people in a boat on a Montana river: They must be on a guided trip. On most rivers, guided fishing accounts for less than 30 percent of angling use. On the Missouri River, one of the state's busiest, the 30 percent mark is eclipsed only slightly during peak season.

Despite the low percentage of overall use, it seems like fishing guides are everywhere. The stats prove they are not. But after twenty years in the biz, I keep



The fishing guide lifestyle is intriguing to some, but be prepared to go all in if you want to be one of the best. The best guides understand it's not about them—it is about the client and protecting the resource. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MONTANA FISHING GUIDE SCHOOL

on Tinder. They hurry home to tie flies if a special pattern or variation was the cause for success. They have clean trucks and boats and take pride in both. The best fishing guides smash the myth of the beer-can-crushing-streamer-chucking-beater-truck-driving dirtbag because they are too busy helping people catch fish.

Adaptability. Guides who make a living doing this know it's about being with people, not fishing. Guides who dabble but ultimately don't cut it think it's only about fishing. The best guides rise above their own personality and enjoy being with everyone. They work with their clients to understand them and have the maturity to adjust to a variety of personalities. As the day unfolds, the best guides are strangers at the start of the day but best friends by lunch.

What makes a great fishing guide? The best share similar traits

Fishiness. I'm a believer that certain people are born with a set degree of "fishiness." But what the heck is fishiness? It's how easy catching fish comes to certain people. I've seen it in my boat and with the guides I've hired—some people just come to catching fish more naturally than others. To be a great guide, it helps to have an innate level of fishiness. There are plenty of great guides who fall in the middle of the fishiness scale, but they have mastered the above traits.

Ambassadors and conservationists. Fish need quality habitat to flourish. Fish, and the habitat they depend on, cannot defend themselves against the increasing threats of climate change, extractive industries and encroaching development. The best guides take pride in standing-up for their resources. They are members of national and grassroots organizations. They prioritize stewardship and education. Litter is hard to come by on rivers frequented by guides—even though they're just a fraction of users—because the best guides pick up after others.

As my beard grays and my eyes fade, I've seen many come into the guiding profession. For every person who thinks being a fly fishing guide is what they are destined to do—like the 20-year-old kid rejecting traditional work as a lifetime corporate ladder climber—there are those of us who come by it naturally.

The life of a great fishing guide is not an easy one, as the sign in my kitchen can attest: "We interrupt this marriage to bring you the fishing season."

Pat Straub is the co-founder of the Montana Fishing Guide School, the author of six books, including "The Frugal Fly Fisher," "Montana On The Fly," and "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fly Fishing." He and his wife own Gallatin River Guides in Big Sky and he co-owns Montana Fishing Outfitters.



Problem-solving skills. The best guides, whether fishing on their own or guiding clients, make it look easy. Easy is accomplished by layers of deciphering what the trout are eating, where they are holding, and how a relatively inexperienced angler can get a trout to eat their fly. By factoring in all the variables—ability, fishing situation, comprehension skills of their anglers, wind, glare on the water ... and the list can go on—guides who impress when others disappoint do it because they think about fishing constantly, working to solve the mini-mysteries of a trout stream.

They know how to have fun. Fishing is fun. It is recreation and a break from the daily routine of life. As the saying goes, "the worst day of fishing beats the best day in the office." For fishing guides, the water is their office. Great guides understand fun and play is an essential element to a day on the water. Catching fish is fun indeed, but the catching can come and go throughout a day; the top-shelf guides are enjoyable to be with even if the catching stinks.

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Grass Sticks ski poles Bamboo is better

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Ski poles are an often-overlooked piece of gear as many people choose to recycle some old pair of rental poles they use year after year. The fact is a well-functioning and designed ski pole can help bring more enjoyment to your day on the slopes.

Grass Sticks have arguably designed one of the top breakthrough products for the ski industry in the past few years. Looking back at breakthrough



The author testing his custom Grass Sticks poles at Baldface Lodge outside of Nelson, British Columbia. PHOTO BY ADRIAN-MATHIEU MORIN



moments in ski gear, these include when skis became shaped, helmets became lighter, ski packs became custom fit and now bamboo ski poles!

Grass Sticks have an incredibly light feel to them, quick swing weight and are very durable. The company offers custom sizing, color choices, an amazing warranty and eco-friendly sourcing of its materials.

The founder of Grass Sticks, Andrew Beckler,

COBI Connected Biking System

If you're reading this while watching the snow fall in Big Sky—and don't spend your winter months fat biking—you may wonder how this technology can positively impact your life. Well, here at EBS we're always looking a few months ahead to impending seasons to find the latest and greatest gear. And if you spend the winter months wheeling around the slushy streets of Bozeman, or dry pavement of cities across the country, the value of the COBI should be immediately apparent.

Short for "connected biking," COBI was launched by a German startup in July 2016 and built to use your smartphone to improve your cycling experience. With the tap of a handlebar-mounted keypad, you can make phone calls, listen to music, navigate busy streets, and monitor your fitness, among other features. Track your miles on the trails this summer while you bump your favorite playlist, all while charging your

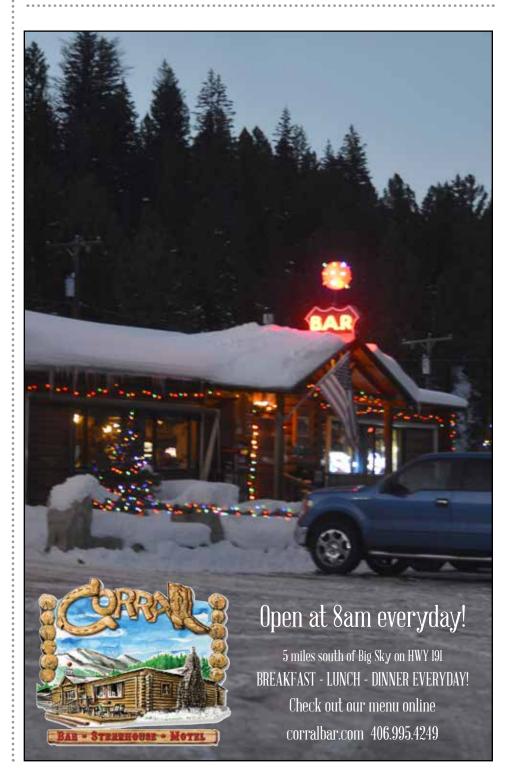
phone.

And don't just take it from us—on Jan. 24, the bike experts behind the 2017 "Design & Innovation Awards" gave COBI the top spot in the "Urban" category, recognizing the technology as a "thoroughly well thought out [system that] makes every ride more convenient and more fun." – Tyler Allen



PHOTO COURTESY OF COBI BIKE

Starting at \$249 cobi.bike



is located in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and started the company in a garage after he became fed up with ugly, bent, kinked and broken poles.

"Each Grass Stick is hand sanded and finished with marine grade coating in Steamboat Springs," Beckler said. "Our grips are offered in a variety of colors and designed to fit and stick in any hand. We offer a variety of fully interchangeable basket sizes and colors for any snow, or style, condition."

So stop using those poles that are the wrong size, bent or look like some recycled piece of your dad's old gear. Get yourself a pair of Grass Sticks and make the planet a better place by supporting small town dreams with kick ass design. – *Eric Ladd*

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Ski Tips: Head and shoulders are crucial in the steeps

BY DAN EGAN **EBS CONTRIBUTOR**

When it comes to ripping the steeps, your head and shoulders are the key to maintaining proper body position, and there are a few important factors to remember.

Looking down the hill with your shoulders square to the slope will allow you to focus on the direction you want to go, and also keep your body in a solid athletic stance over your skis.

To keep your head in the game, focus your eyes down the hill. My favorite saying is, "You go where you look, so look where you want to go." In other words, don't look across the slope at the rocks or the trees because if you do, your skis will carry you in that direction.

It's important to lose vertical distance, rather than traverse and find yourself in a situation that hinders your downhill progress—such as getting your ski tips stuck on a bump, rocks or a stump.

Squaring your shoulders to the hill will also cement your body position. When your shoulders are square to the hill you'll be creating the lower body angles required for maintaining edge control on the steep pitch.

It's critical to keep your uphill hand high and extended down the hill, because the common mistake here is letting your uphill hand touch the snow, which rotates your shoulders.

Proper pole planting technique is required to link turns on the steeps. When planting the downhill pole, extend your arm forward and down the hill so that your body does not ski by the pole. This motion is what keeps our shoulders square to the slope.

A picture says a thousand words, and last year I took these photos of Heather Doolittle skiing the steeps in France during one of my camps. The slope is extremely steep and the snow was inconsistent.

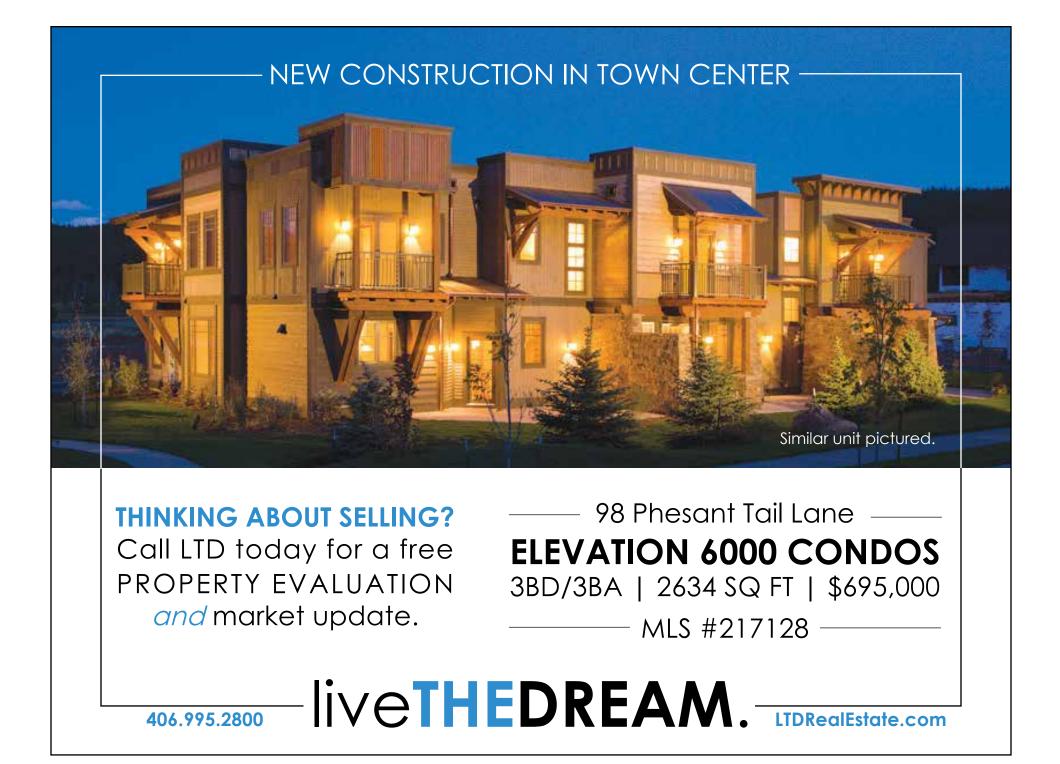
As you look at the sequence of these shots, notice how rock solid her upper body is and how her path is going downhill the entire time with little to no traversing in this very intimidating terrain.

To obtain this position it takes both mental and physical preparation. Start on low-angle slopes and ski deliberately down the hill making short radius turns; then progress to wide open tree runs and ski down the fall line using trees to mark the width of your turns; and then progress to wide open steeper slopes and maintain a corridor down the hill.

Next, start to ski in restricted terrain that has obstacles on the sides of the slope, and over time you'll start to trust how your head and shoulders are the key to proper body position on steep terrain.

Extreme skiing pioneer Dan Egan has appeared in 12 Warren Miller Ski films and countless others. Today he teaches clinics and guides trips at locations around the world including Big Sky, where he'll be teaching Feb. 23-25, March 2-4 and March 9-11, and throughout the season (contact Big Sky Mountain Sports for availability). Find more ski tips from Dan Egan at skiclinics.com/education/skitips.







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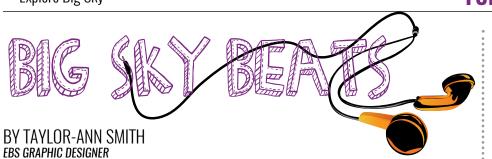
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Find out what tunes we're bumping! In Big Sky Beats, Explore Big Sky staff offers suggested tracks for your next playlist. Whether you need to freshen up your music library, want to expand your collection, or just need some tunes for a powder day, we've got you covered.

"We're all a little weird, and life is a little weird. And when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love." – Dr. Seuss

Valentine's Day is commonly associated with loving an individual and spoiling them with oversized stuffed animals, boxes of candy and a candle lit dinner. However, this year I challenge you to let all of those you love know how much they mean to you instead.

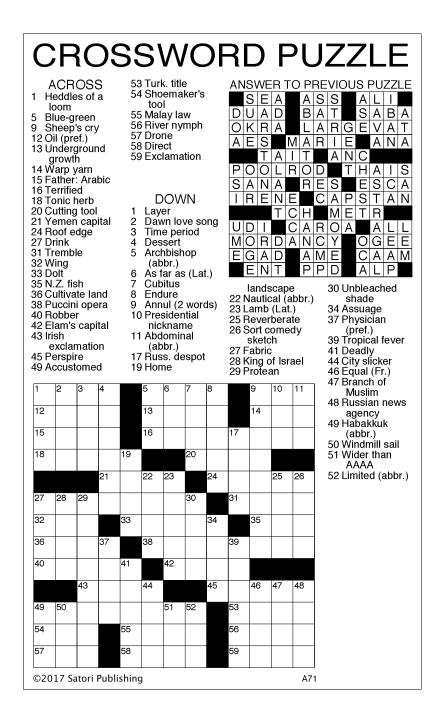
I recently went through a tough breakup from a long-term relationship and although it hurt to lose him, it made me infinitely more grateful for those that I do have in my life. Friends, family and coworkers have helped me laugh through the hard times, been supportive during times of transition and joined me in cheers to the good times. Therefore, my Valentine's Day will be in celebration of them and telling them how much their love has meant to me.

And just for the heck of it, I'll probably buy myself a box of chocolates.

Below is a list of my favorite songs that tell a story about the binding strength of love:

"Us," Anna Of The North
 "Don't Leave," Snakehips, MO
 "Nothing Without You," The Weeknd
 "Fall," Ronin, Deverano
 "Diamonds & Gasoline," Turnpike Troubadours
 "Fire Away," Chris Stapleton
 "All The Pretty Girls," Kaleo
 "Remedy," Adele
 "Is There Somewhere," Halsey
 "Winterbreak," MUNA

Visit explorebigsky.com/beats for a sampling of the playlist.



American Life in Poetry: Column 619

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE

Fog carries mystery within it, and here's a fine poem about a day in which a memory approaches through fog and makes itself real. Michael Lauchlan lives in Michigan and his most recent book is "Trumbull Ave.," (Wayne State Univ. Press, 2015). This poem appeared first in Cortland Review.

Thaw

Plows have piled a whitened range faux mountains at the end of our street, slopes shrinking, glazed, grayed. Fog rules the day. In woolly air, shapes

stir—slow cars leave a trace of exhaust, careful walkers share loud intimacies. My mother's birth slides across a calendar. Like

a stranger who jumps off a bus, crosses tracks and strides toward us, memory parts the sodden gloom

of our winter, as though, today, only she can see where she goes and track where she's been.

We do not accept unsolicited submissions. American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright © 2014 by Michael Lauchlan, "Thaw," from The Cortland Review, (Issue 65, 2014). Poem reprinted by permission of Michael Lauchlan and the publisher. Introduction copyright © 2016 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006.



¥ SIR PUCK O'CONNOR

BREED:

Border Collie / Aristocrat Mix

AGE:

17 years old

OWNER:

Joe & Emily O'Connor

LIKES:

Adventures, carrying around bones, butt rubs, car rides, going to the office, people food, people beds, people pillows, people.

DISLIKES:

Being placed in "the corner," the trunk, or anywhere else; baths; cats; Brexit; the Yankees

CLAIM TO FAME:

Unwraps own Christmas presents and everyone else's.

48 Feb. 3 - 16, 2017

BACK 40

BACKEI

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.

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

The pit stop: Dig and communicate

BY ERIC KNOFF EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Snow ties the backcountry community together, and sometimes it ties us to avalanches. Taking the time to dig a snow pit and assess snow stability provides valuable information and generates conversation between group members. Good communication leads to better decision making in avalanche terrain.

Snow pits are often dug on slopes less than 30 degrees steep with a similar aspect and elevation to the slope you plan to ride. It isn't necessary, or prudent, to dig on slopes steeper than 30 degrees to get an accurate representation of the snowpack on steeper slopes. Your exposure to avalanche terrain should be minimal when digging a snow pit.

Snow pits are easy to dig and often take less than 15 minutes. A standard pit ranges from 1.5 to 2 meters wide and 1 to 1.5 meters deep. When the snowpack is less than 1.5 meters deep it's best to dig to the ground. When the snowpack is deeper that 1.5 meters it's not as important to expose snow at the ground because skiers and riders are less likely to impact weak layers buried that deep.

When digging a snow pit, make sure the front and sidewalls of the pit are clean and smooth, allowing for accurate examination of different layers. Inspecting snow stratigraphy requires feeling with your hands the different layers from top to bottom. A hard layer of snow over a softer, weaker layer is a poor snowpack structure. A poor structure can produce unstable conditions and increased avalanche danger.

A more thorough look at the relationship between layers involves stability tests, which require isolating a column of snow and applying force through a series of loading steps. The most common stability test is the extended column test, or ECT.

An ECT involves isolating a column of snow 30 centimeters wide by 90 centimeters long and applying force to a shovel on either end of the column. Standard loading steps are done by applying 10 taps from the wrist, 10 from the elbow and then 10 from the shoulder. If a fracture initiates on a buried weak layer and propagates to the other end of the column, this is an unstable result and steep slopes should be avoided.

Taking time to dig a snow pit helps a group come together and communicate in an environment that allows individuals to voice their opinions about snow stability. If one member feels uncomfortable about snow conditions, the group should defer to the most conservative approach.





The primary purpose of digging a snow pit is to determine snowpack stability, but it also serves to increase communication within the group. Taking time to investigate snow stability and discussing it with your partners is a great way to make safe and informed decisions in the backcountry.

Eric Knoff is an avalanche forecaster for the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center. He's been a public forecaster the past seven winters, and also spent four seasons as an avalanche forecaster for the Going-to-the-Sun Road plowing operation in Glacier National Park.

Visit mtavalanche.com to view the daily avalanche advisory for southwest Montana and send your snowpack observations to mtavalanche@gmail.com.



Explore Big Sky

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Feb. 3 - 16, 2017 **49**

Section 4: EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT Wike Super performing at WMPAC pg. 51



Respecting the roots of bluegrass music Montana super group the Two Bit Franks return to Big Sky Big Grass

BY SARAH GIANELLI EBS CONTRIBUTOR

BOZEMAN – Squeezed into the front room of a bungalow in Bozeman's Cooper Park Historic District are four of the five Two Bit Franks—a bluegrass super group comprised of guitarist John Lowell, upright bassist Russ Smith, both from Livingston; Bozeman banjoist Jeff Shouse and mandolin player Tom Murphy; and Big Sky's versatile mando-picker Kevin Fabozzi.

Minus Fabozzi, the band has gathered at Murphy's on the afternoon of Jan. 24 to practice for the 11th annual Big Sky Big Grass festival at Big Sky Resort Feb. 9-12. Most of the Franks were part of discussions with resort beverage manager Steve Merlino that led to the festival's inception, and have been performing at it—in some configuration or another—ever since.

Bluegrass, perhaps more so than any other genre, is head-spinningly incestuous. The Two Bit Franks are only one of many combinations in which these seasoned musicians play or have played. Guitarist and front man John Lowell (of critically acclaimed Kane's River and Growling Old Men) tours internationally as the John Lowell Band with Murphy, and plays regular après gigs as a variable trio with Fabozzi, Murphy and Smith. The band mates have also intermingled in Stormy Creek, Little Jane and the Pistol Whips and The Salty Dogs. And this is just where they've overlapped. You get the point.

The Two Bit Franks—a name that evolved out of a package of frozen "skinless franks"—formed five years ago out of Lowell's desire for a tighter, more polished outfit to play with than the looser jam-style bluegrass groups.

or figure out what you can do to support that person. They're unwritten, but they are rules nonetheless. If you break them you probably won't be invited back."

While there is also a fundamental inclusiveness to bluegrass music, Murphy would never presume to jump in before receiving the signal to do so.

"It's a funny thing, and you learn it early on," Murphy said. "You wait to be invited. And once you are invited, you wait for someone to tell you to take a solo. It's all about saying 'I'm here; I'd like to help, and if you'll have me, if you give me a nod, I'll do my best."

Smith chimes in by saying that, then, when you are asked, you had better be prepared. "You better know the lyrics; you better know how to share the song and call the solos," he said. "You're expected to step up at that point. Now you're leading the song."

Discussing bluegrass etiquette segues into a conversation about the muchcoveted jam sessions that traditionally crop up in the festival's hub, the Huntley Lodge, all hours of the day, night and wee-morning over the course of the weekend.

"There's magic that can happen in the late night jams," Murphy said.

The Two Bit Franks perform free shows 4-5:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10 at Chet's Bar and Grill and 3:30-5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11 at Montana Jack. For a full Big Sky Big Grass schedule visit bigskyresort.com.

"The bluegrass community is so fun because we can all get together and play music because we have this huge library of tunes to pick from," Murphy said. "That's a great thing. The difference with this band is that we'll take one of John's original compositions or a bluegrass standard and talk about them, make serious notes, decide how fast we're going to play it, who's doing a solo when, work out the harmony arrangements ... It's those little accents and things that really take it to a whole different level."



The band breaks into a Lowell original called "Skalkaho Road"—a melodic, softly insistent bluegrass number about the treacherous pass over the Sapphire Mountains between Philipsburg and Hamilton, Montana. The song demonstrates Lowell's gift for timeless songwriting and the group's familiarity and ease with one another. They know how to sing and play in harmony—not step on each other's musical toes so to speak—which, it turns out, is what bluegrass music is all about.

"It's about bringing everybody together to bring the whole sound up," said stand-up bassist Smith. "There's kind of a rule book in a way. Because it's acoustic, there's a dynamic in how you project. You have to be patient and wait and take your turn. You have to respect the person who's taking the lead at the time [and] back off

Bluegrass super group Two Bit Franks brings together musicians from Big Sky, Bozeman and Livingston. The seasoned musicians have been delighting Big Sky Big Grass audiences since the festival's inception in 2006. PHOTO BY JOANNE GARDNER

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Gallatin Grass Project: serving up the local grass

BY SARAH GIANELLI EBS CONTRIBUTOR

BIG SKY – Gallatin Grass Project, made up of Brian Stumpf on upright bass, Ben Macht on mandolin, and John Foster on guitar, is not exempt from the local music scene's tendency to intermingle musicians under various, changing names.

The trio premiered at the Big Sky Big Grass fest in 2012 as the Driftwood Grinners and played as such through 2015. This is the second year they will perform as Gallatin Grass Project and the fourth year they have energized the weekend crowd during the Friday après slot at Montana Jack.

"Steve has been great about keeping up with our band name changes," Stumpf said, in the playfully sarcastic fashion that suffuses most of the band's sentiments.

Stumpf admittedly wasn't the biggest fan of bluegrass music, but it has grown on him and the annual festival has played a part in that.

"It's exposed me to a lot of different styles of music," said Stumpf, who also plays in the rock band Riot Act. "And I really look forward to that weekend it's turned me on to this genre that I didn't really care for before and now really embrace."

For Stumpf and other local musicians, it can be entertaining to see big name musicians out of their element and out on the slopes during Big Sky Big Grass.

"There was one time I got to ride up the tram with one of the guys from [String Cheese Incident]," Stumpf said. "And if you didn't know who they were, you'd be like 'get out of the way, gaper.' The stage is their kingdom but the mountain is sort of my home turf."

All kidding aside, Gallatin Grass Project takes music seriously and is honored to be part of the event and the only other local band playing the festival along with the Two Bit Franks.

"I look up to those guys—as individuals, musicians, and as a band," Stumpf said. "They're all-stars.

I'll say this about the Franks—that's how we want to play as a band."

Gallatin Grass Project will provide their own brand of eclectic originals and traditional tunes interspersed with re-invented covers that might not seem to lend themselves to bluegrass renditionssongs by Ween and Cracker, for example-but that GGP makes work.



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Expect original tunes, re-imagined covers and a healthy dose of comedic banter from Big Sky trio Gallatin Grass Project during Big Sky Big Grass. Keeping with tradition, the group energizes the weekend festivities during their Friday apès slot at Montana Jack on Feb. 10. PHOTO BY LANDER BACHERT

"We're not trying to play anyone else's sound," Macht said. "Even if we play someone else's song, we do it our way."

Macht is excited for the weekend of music at The Huntley and the opportunity to find musicians to jam with any time of the day or night.

"The whole festival is cool because it's so intimate," Macht said. "Most festivals are outside, so to be able to be that close and intimate with the performers is really special. And it gives you a festival fix right in the middle of winter when you need it most."

Gallatin Grass Project performs a free show from 3:30-5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10 at Big Sky Resort's Montana Jack. For a full Big Sky Big Grass Festival schedule, visit bigskyresort.com.

Prepare to be amazed Mystifier Mike Super performs for all ages at WMPAC Feb. 18

feats, from the

Hollywood elite

to the television

"Phenomenon" and "America's Got

In this interview

with EBS, Super

craft, his imaginary

magician's assistant,

and why Big Sky families should

turn out for his

performances at

Performing Arts

Feb. 18.

the Warren Miller

Center on Saturday

Explore Big Sky: You refer to yourself

as a mystifier as opposed to a magician? What is the distinction?

Mike Super:

Calling myself a mystifier creates

talks about his

Talent."

audiences of NBC's

BY SARAH GIANELLI EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Mike Super has been obsessed with magic ever since he stepped foot into a Disneyworld magic shop when he was six years old. A natural entertainer, Super has since astonished millions of people with his illusionist



Prepare for an evening of mind-blowing illusion and interactive entertainment at magician Mike Super's performance at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center on Feb. 18. PHOTO BY DWAINE REIDER

mystery in and of itself—people don't know exactly what to expect. They start wondering before the show even begins.

EBS: What can Big Sky audiences expect?

M.S.: The best way to describe the show is a magic show turned on its side and dumped out into the audience. I'll be giving the audience the winning Powerball numbers; I'll take control of someone's body using voodoo magic and even make it snow inside. It's a huge array of different things ... I can only give them my perspective. And I've found that the less I say about is this real or not real, the more intriguing it becomes for everyone. But if I was backed into a corner and had to explain what Desmond is, it's basically an Indian term called a tulpa—a mental projection in your mind that becomes so concentrated that it becomes experienced as real.

You can think of Desmond as a guardian angel, the voice we all have inside, or you can call him a tulpa. But he and I have a ton of fun together. It's really entertaining for me and for the audience—and that's what I'm out to create: a memorable experience for people.

EBS: What would you say to Big Sky parents who might need a nudge to bring the whole family to your show?

M.S.: My show has a universal appeal that people don't fully realize until afterward ... it's really three to four shows in one. The kids can watch it from their perspective, and there's a double entendre going on that the parents really enjoy. It's completely family appropriate but there's something in it for everybody, and it can be a really great family bonding experience in that way.

If you still need convincing, find Super on Twitter and be will conduct a complimentary mind-reading exercise to demonstrate bis skills. Super performs at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center. Visit warrenmillerpac.org or mikesuper.com for further information.

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and emotions like all good theater should be.

EBS: What is magic's appeal?

M.S.: In today's age—when you can Google anything—magic becomes a fun reminder of all that we don't know; it reconnects people to that sense of childhood wonder. I try to create that for people, and I get to experience it again through their faces.

EBS: Can you still be mystified by magic as an insider?

M.S.: It's rare, but I love when it happens. As a magician, you look at it in a different way. I love to see someone do something brilliant—and usually it's a simple, small thing. Even though I might know how it works, I love the genius in why it works.

EBS: Tell EBS readers about this "imaginary friend" of yours who goes by the name Desmond and plays an integral role in your performances.M.S.: Let me start by saying I'm a Christian guy. This is nothing demonic, which is the first thing people think. I never tell anyone what to believe

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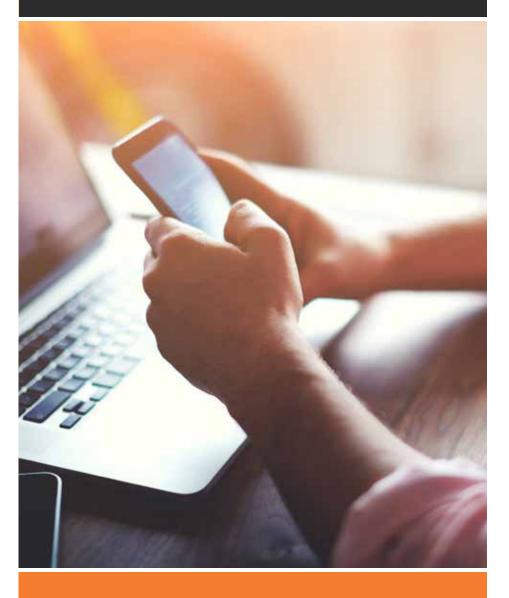
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EVENTS CALENDAR

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 – THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

*If your event falls between February 17 and February 30, please submit it by February 10.

Big Sky

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 Kid's Yoga Santosha Wellness Center, 3:15

Live Music Lone Mountain Ranch, 7 p.m.

Trivia Night Lone Peak Cinema, 8 p.m.

Fort Knox Five Lone Peak Brewery Loft, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 Dummy Jump Big Sky Resort, all day

Ski Joring 320 Guest Ranch, 1 p.m.

Vine & Dine Showcase Dinner Peaks Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.

Kaia Kater Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 Superbowl Party Lone Peak Brewery, 4 p.m.

Live Music Lone Mountain Ranch, 4 p.m.

Ski Joring 320 Guest Ranch, 5 p.m.

Adult Drop-In Hockey Town Center Park, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6 Mike Haring Carabiner Lounge, 4:00 p.m.

Kids Hockey Town Center Park, 5:30 p.m.

Prime Rib Monday 320 Ranch, 5 p.m.

Adult Drop-In Hockey Town Center Park, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7 Community Learning Center Big Sky Discovery Academy, 4 p.m.

Big Sky Young Professionals

Big Sky Big Grass Big Sky Resort, 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 BSAFE Avalanche Course Big Sky Resort, all day

Kid's Yoga Santosha Wellness Center, 3:15

Big Sky Big Grass Big Sky Resort, 3:30 p.m.

Trivia Night Lone Peak Cinema, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 BSAFE Avalanche Course Big Sky Resort, all day

USASA Slopestyle and Rail Jam Big Sky Resort, 9 a.m.

Big Sky Big Grass Big Sky Resort, 3:30 p.m.

Rocky Mountain Pearls Gallatin Riverhouse Grill, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 BSAFE Avalanche Course Big Sky Resort, all day

USASA Slopestyle and Rail Jam Big Sky Resort, 9 a.m.

Big Sky Big Grass Big Sky Resort, 4 p.m.

Adult Drop-In Hockey Town Center Park, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13 Mike Haring Carabiner Lounge, 4 p.m.

Prime Rib Monday 320 Ranch, 5 p.m.

Kids Hockey Town Center Park, 5:30 p.m.

Adult Drop-In Hockey Town Center Park, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 Big Sky Chamber Board Meeting Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, 8:30 a.m.

Community Learning Center Big Sky Discovery Academy, 4 p.m.

Valentine's Day Celebration Lone Mountain Ranch, 6 p.m.

King Crab Feast Lone Peak Brewery, by reservation Michael Batdorf Wild Joe's Coffee Spot, 6 p.m.

Bozeman Icedogs vs. Gillette Wild Haynes Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

Ellen Classics: Doctor Zhivago The Ellen Theatre, 7:30

6th Annual All Original Comedy Revue Verge Theater, 8 p.m.

Pigeons Playing Ping Pong Eagles Lodge Ballroom, 9 p.m.

Alter Ego American Legion, 9 p.m.

Renegades Eagles Lodge, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

King and Queen of the Ridge Bridger Bowl, 8 a.m.

Bozeman Winter Farmers' Market Emerson Ballroom, 9 a.m.

Community Party and Potluck Beall Park Recreation Center, 5:30 p.m.

Left on Tenth MAP Brewing, 6 p.m.

Pinhead Classic Eagles Lodge Ballroom, 6 p.m.

Signs of Life Willson Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.

Lester Rocks The Ellen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

Bozeman Icedogs vs. Gillette Wild Haynes Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

6th Annual All Original Comedy Revue Verge Theater, 8 p.m.

Fort Knox Five The Filling Station, 9 p.m.

Alter Ego American Legion Bozeman, 9 p.m.

Renegades Eagles Lodge, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 Galloping Dog Agility & Flyball Club Gallatin County Fairgrounds, noon

Free Family Movie: Freaky Friday The Ellen Theatre, 2 p.m.

Signs of Life Willson Auditorium, 2:30 p.m.

Bridger Mountain Big Band

Guest Artist Velvet Brown: Tuba Recital Reynold's Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 Sensational Babies

Museum of the Rockies, 10 a.m.

Wild & Scenic Film Festivals Emerson's Crawford Theatre, 6 p.m.

Ski and Snowboard Tuning Basics REI, 6 p.m.

Bozeman's Original Pub Trivia Pub 317, 7 p.m.

Science Inquiry Series Museum of the Rockies, 7 p.m.

Lecture: Sir Ken Robinson MSU SUB Ballroom, 7:30 p.m.

The Bright Light Social Hour The Filling Station, 8 p.m.

Cackling Eagles Eagles Lodge Ballroom, 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9 Tours for Tots Museum of the Rockies, 10 a.m.

The Vibe Quartet 406 Brewing, 6 p.m.

Gallatin Valley Land Trust Trail Mix Masonic Lodge, 6 p.m.

Snowshoeing Basics REI, 6 p.m.

Going Global: Intercultural Skills for Work and Play MSU, 6:30 p.m.

MSU Women's Basketball vs. Northern Arizona Brick Breeden Fieldhouse, 7 p.m.

Erin & The Project Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

Bozeman Doc Series The Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Claudia Williams Kountry Korner Café, 5:30 p.m.

Lane Norberg Wild Joe's Coffee Spot, 6 p.m.

Companion Rescue Clinic for Skiers REI, 6 p.m.

Lip Sync for Literacy The Ellen Theatre, 6:30 p.m.

Bozeman Icedogs vs. Yellowstone Quake Haynes Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

A Little Night of Music

Advisory Committee Meeting Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, 5:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Live Music Lone Mountain Ranch, 4 p.m.

Jack Creek Preserve Winter Lecture Series Lone Mountain Ranch, 5:30 p.m.

Ribbon Cutting Ski Butlers, 5:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Brown Bag Lunch Talks: Conservation Easements Big Sky Community Organization, 12 p.m.

Skate or Classic Nordic Races Town Center Dog Loop, 5 p.m.

Community Learning Center Big Sky Discovery Academy, 4 p.m.

Fly Tying with GRG Gallatin River Guides, 5 p.m.

Kids Hockey Town Center Park, 5:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Mike Haring Carabiner Lounge, 4 p.m.

Live Music Lone Mountain Ranch, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Visit Big Sky Board Meeting Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, 8:30 a.m.

Community Learning Center Big Sky Discovery Academy, 4 p.m.

Fly Tying with GRG Gallatin River Guides, 5 p.m.

Tom Marino Gallatin Riverhouse Grill, 7 p.m.

Bozeman

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 Claudia Williams Kountry Korner Café, 5:30 p.m. Eagles Lodge, / p.m.

Aran Buzzas Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Drop-In Improv: Grades 6-12 Verge Theater, 4 p.m.

Monday Night Blues Jam The Filling Station, 7 p.m.

Spanish Class with Kristin ND Wolf Lockhorn Cider House, 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7 2017 Take the LEAD Series Bozeman Chamber of Commerce, 8 a.m.

Tours for Tots Museum of the Rockies, 10 a.m.

Neil Fiddow MAP Brewing, 6 p.m.

Twenty One Pilots Brick Breeden Fieldhouse, 7 p.m. MSU Black Box Theater, 7:30 p.m.

6th Annual All Original Comedy Revue Verge Theater, 8 p.m.

Andrew Gromiller Band The Filling Station, 9 p.m.

Strangeways American Legion, 9 p.m.

The Dirt Farmers Eagles Lodge, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Love 'Em or Leave 'Em 5K Race The Filling Station, 8:30 a.m.

Museum of the Rockies' 60th Birthday Party Museum of the Rockies, 9 a.m.

MSU Women's Basketball vs. Southern Utah Brick Breeden Fieldhouse, 2 p.m.

Silly Moose Improv Comedy Verge Theater, 2 p.m.

Explore Big Sky

34th Annual International Food Bazaar MSU SUB, 4 p.m.

Companion Rescue Clinic for Skiers REI, 4 p.m.

30th Annual Sweet Tooth Ball The Commons at Baxter and Love, 7 p.m.

Bozeman Icedogs vs. Missoula Junior Bruins Haynes Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

The Barefoot Movement The Ellen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

A Little Night of Music MSU Black Box Theater, 7:30 p.m.

6th Annual All Original Comedy Revue Verge Theater, 8 p.m.

Ballroom Dance Bozeman Valentine's Dance Bozeman Senior Center, 8 p.m.

Cole & The Thornes The Filling Station, 9 p.m.

Strangeways American Legion Bozeman, 9 p.m.

The Dirt Farmers Eagles Lodge, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 A Little Night Music MSU Black Box Theater, 2:30 p.m.

Harry and Snowman Film The Émerson Center for the Arts & Culture, 5 p.m.

Lucky Valentines MAP Brewing, 6 p.m.

Bridger Mountain Big Band Eagles Lodge, 7 p.m.

Afroman Zebra Cocktail Lounge, 7 p.m.

Chris Cunningham Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

Date Night: Aerial Arts Class The Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13 Monday Night Improv on the Verge Verge Theater, 7 p.m.

Spanish Class with Kristin ND Wolf Lockhorn Cider House, 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 Mathias MAP Brewing, 6 p.m.

Cirque du Coeur Rockin' TJ Ranch, 6 p.m.

Valentine's at the Ellen The Ellen Theatre, 6:30 p.m.

Singles Party Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

Rockin' R Bingo Rockin' R Bar, 7 p.m.

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Art on the Rocks Series: **Champagne & Paper Flowers** Rockin' R Bar, 6:30 p.m.

MSU Men's Basketball vs. Portland State Brick Breeden Fieldhouse, 7 p.m.

Mathias Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

A Little Night of Music MSU Black Box Theater, 7:30 p.m.

Irish Rovers The Ellen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

RECURRING EVENTS: Pints with Purpose Bridger Brewing, Mondays at 5 p.m.

Burgers & Bingo Eagles Lodge, Friday Nights at 5:30 p.m.

Open Mic Night The Haufbrau, Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays at 10:30 p.m.

Karaoke American Legion, Mondays at 9 p.m.

Cribbage Night Eagles Lodge, Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Karaoke Bar IX, Tuesdays at 9 p.m.

Music & Mussels Bridger Brewing, Wednesdays at 5 p.m.

Pickin' in the Parks The Story Mansion, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Bluegrass Thursdays with The Bridger Creek Boys Red Tractor Pizza, Thursdays at 7 p.m.

Karaoke Eagles Lodge, Thursdays at 8:30 p.m.

Yoga for All Bozeman Public Library, Tuesdays at 11 a.m and 12 p.m.

Walk for the Health of It Peets Hill, Fridays at noon

Livingston & Paradise Valley

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 Livingston Gun Show Park County Fairgrounds, 3 p.m.

One Leaf Clover The Murray Bar, 9 p.m.

Milton Menasco & The Big Fiasco Chico Hot Springs, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 Livingston Gun Show Park County Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Community Closet Patagonia Event Community Closet Thrift Store, 10 a.m.

UIL: Spare Change Open House United in Light Draft Horse Sanctuary, 10 a.m. Leif Christian Katabatic Brewing, 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7 Beer for a Cause: Shift Empowerment Katabatic Brewing, all day

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9 Blood Drive Livingston Health Care, 11 a.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Blood Drive Livingston Health Care, 9 a.m.

Erin & The Project Uncorked, 6:30 p.m.

Band of Drifters The Murray Bar, 9 p.m.

The Max Chico Hot Springs, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Community Closet Patagonia Event Community Closet Thrift Store, 10 a.m.

Boots n Buckles Ball Park County Fairgrounds, 5:30 p.m.

Corrine Simpson Katabatic Brewing, 5:30 p.m.

Kenny James Miller Band The Murray Bar, 9 p.m.

The Max Chico Hot Springs, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 Livingston Film Series: Catfish Shane Lalani Center for the Arts, 6:30 p.m.

Jay's Lounge The Murray Bar, 9 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

The Lucky Valentines The Murray Bar, 5 p.m.

Bluegrass Jam Katabatic Brewing, 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 Beer for a Cause: Big Brothers Big Sisters Katabatic Brewing, all day

Laurie Sargent The Attic, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Willy James The Murray Bar, 8 p.m.

West Yellowstone

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 Bingo Branch Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.

Winter Snowshoe Program Hebgen Lake Ranger Station, 1 p.m.

Matthias The Buffalo Bar, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 Kids'N'Snow

West Yellowstone Ice Rink, all day

DJ Adam James The Buffalo Bar, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Intermountain Division Junior National Nordic Ski Qualifier #2 Rendezvous Trailhead Building, all dav

Live Poker The Buffalo Bar, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Intermountain Division Junior National Nordic Ski Qualifier #2 Rendezvous Trailhead Building, all day

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13 Martial Arts Classes Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 Martial Arts Classes

Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 Martial Arts Classes

Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Knit Night Stagecoach Inn, 6 p.m.

Ennis

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 Madison County Public Meeting Madison County Courthouse, 2 p.m.

Live Music Willie's Distillery, 5:30 p.m.

Shea Stewart Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 Michael Batdorf Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 Tom Catmull Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9 Chamber Board Meeting Ennis Chamber of Commerce, 8 a.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Live Music Willie's Distillery, 5:30 p.m.

Russ Chapman Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Tom Georges Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 Erin & The Project Norris Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

MSU Faculty Recital Reynold's Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 Sensational Babies Museum of the Rockies. 10 a.m.

Winter Camping Basics REI, 6 p.m.

The Fundamentals of Successful Investing Montana State University, 6:15 p.m.

International Guitar Night The Ellen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

The Vibe Quartet 406 Brewing, 6 p.m.

Extreme History Project Lecture Series Museum of the Rockies, 6 p.m.

Cross-Country Skiing Basics Class REI, 6 p.m.

Going Global: Intercultural Skills for Work and Play MSU Bozeman, 6:30 p.m.

An Evening with John Blue Featehr The Buckhorn Saloon & Theater, 7 p.m. Swingley Funk-Latin-Jazz The Murray Bar, 9 p.m.

Milton Menasco & The Big Fiasco Chico Hot Springs, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Livingston Gun Show Park County Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

ER's World Famous Super Bowl Party Chico Hot Springs, 4 p.m.

Jay's Lounge The Murray Bar, 9 p.m. **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6** Augustus The Murray Bar, 5 p.m.

Bluegrass lam Katabatic Brewing, 5:30 p.m. Live Poker The Buffalo Bar, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Kids'N'Snow West Yellowstone Ice Rink, all day

MONDAY. FEBRUARY 6 Martial Arts Classes Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7 Martial Arts Classes Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 Martial Arts Classes Povah Center, 5:30 & 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Knit Night Stagecoach Inn. 6 p.m. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Bingo Branch Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.

30th Annual Sweet Tooth Ball

The Commons at Baxter and Love *February* 11, 7-11 p.m.

Join us for the 30th Annual Sweet Tooth Ball at the Commons - a fundraiser to support Bridgercare's new clinic! All the funds raised will be matched by an anonymous donor and double your impact.

Celebrate a night of dancing and entertainment with Missy O'Malley. Bid in the auction and win fun raffie prizes. Indulge in delicious appetizers, desserts and coffee.

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MSU's Black Box Theater features Tony-Award winning musical Intermountain Opera Bozeman and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks team up for production

EBS STAFF

Two of Gallatin Valley's cultural bastions, Intermountain Opera Bozeman and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, are continuing their creative collaboration by bringing Stephen Sondheim's "A Little Night Music" to Montana State University's Black Box Theater.

Regular performances run Friday, Feb. 10 through Sunday, Feb. 26 with Thursday, Friday and Saturday performances at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2:30 p.m. There will also be two Saturday matinees at 2:30 p.m. on Feb. 18 and 25.

Based on the Ingmar Bergman film, "Smiles from a Summer Night," the musical follows the romantic entanglements of several couples during a weekend in the country. A seductive promenade that weaves through the aspirations and bemusement of love, this Tony-Award winning musical features both comical and courting songs as only Sondheim can spin—delightful rhapsodies such as "A Weekend in the Country" and "You Must Meet My Wife," as well as the stirring, melancholy aria, "Send in the Clowns."

The company is brimming with some of Bozeman's most exciting performers and musicians, as well as long-time favorites who are returning to Bozeman for this production.

Kevin Asselin of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks will direct the production with musical supervision by Linda Curtis of Intermountain

Opera Bozeman. The cast will feature Kristie Dale Sanders of Broadway fame in the leading role of Desiree Armfeldt; and, Bozeman's own, Dan Sharkey, coming home to take on the role of her former suitor, Fredrik Egerman.

Sharkey has enjoyed a highly accomplished career on Broadway, off-Broadway, and with reputable theater companies along the east coast, as well as in Washington, D.C. and Chicago. Sharkey's Broadway credits include "Amazing Grace," "The Bridges of Madison County" and "The Music Man."

IOB favorite Sean Anderson stars as the puffed-up soldier, Count Carl Magnus. MSIP alumni Rebecca Hurd, Benjamin Barker, Kristin Hammargren and Susan Miller return in supporting roles. Local favorites including Debbie Jamieson, Tasha Fain, Coco Douma, Frank Simpson, Reginald Mead, Valarie Andrews, Steven Harris-Weiel and Maya Dickerson complete the cast.

Music direction will be under the baton of Chicago-based conductor John Cockerill.

A special fundraising gala event—which will include a special "sneak peek" preview of the performance—will be held Wednesday, Feb. 8 beginning at 6 p.m.

For gala tickets, theater tickets and full schedule of performances call Intermountain Opera Bozeman at (406) 587-2889 or visit intermountainopera.org.

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'Einstein's Gravity Playlist' fills the dome at MOR's Taylor Planetarium Interdisciplinary MSU collaboration to run through May 26

MSU NEWS SERVICE

A new planetarium show created at Montana State University aims to bring a dynamic and multidimensional experience of Einstein's theory of gravity and last year's discovery of gravitational waves to the public.

The production, "Einstein's Gravity Playlist," will be shown three times a day in the Taylor Planetarium at MSU's Museum of the Rockies through Friday, Feb. 24, and daily at 1 p.m. from Feb. 25 to May 26. It will also be offered to planetariums worldwide, with future showings already set for Seattle, Texas and Germany.

Two years in the making, the 23-minute show is a collaboration between MSU's School of Film and Photography and School of Music, Taylor Planetarium and the eXtreme Gravity Institute. Work began on the show before the announcement of the first detection of gravitational waves in February 2016, a discovery in which MSU's eXtreme Gravity Institute played a crucial role.

"The show tells the story of Einstein's theory of gravity, the story of gravitational waves and the big news related to their discovery," said Nicolas Yunes, associate professor in the MSU Department of Physics and co-founder of eXtreme Gravity Institute.

The institute was established in 2016 with the goal of deepening Montana's involvement in extreme gravity research, education and public outreach, Yunes said.

"The show is a perfect example of what the eXtreme Gravity Institute is all about," he said.





A new planetarium show, "Einstein's Gravity Playlist," created by Montana State University faculty, students and staff, will premiere at Taylor Planetarium at the Museum of the Rockies Jan. 14. Shown is Alisa Amador as "Lucia," a doctoral student in extreme gravitational physics. PHOTO BY THEO LIPFERT

During the show, Yunes said audiences will see what it looks like when black holes collide and neutron stars merge.

"They'll also see stars exploding into supernova, an explanation of Einstein's theory of gravity and the experiments performed to prove that the theory is correct," he said. "And, they'll experience the vibrations of space and time accompanied by a really cool soundtrack."

The idea for a planetarium show grew from two outreach events Yunes organized at MSU: "Celebrating Einstein" in 2013 and "Rhythms of the Universe: Words and Worlds in Motion" in 2014. Both events combined science and the arts to capture the attention of the public while demonstrating the artistry and wonder that can be found in science.

"I thought it would be interesting and challenging to create a planetarium show, but I didn't have the expertise to do so," Yunes said. "Fortunately, MSU is full of highly talented and enthusiastic collaborators who could join me in this endeavor."

Theo Lipfert, director of MSU's School of Film and Photography, said directing the film was a "huge creative and technical challenge."

"We were making visible a science that can't be seen," Lipfert said.

Lipfert worked with a team of 15 MSU students, staff and alumni, including graduates of MSU's Science and Natural History Filmmaking program who work as filmmakers at NASA's Goddard Space Center.

"We used every tool we could think of to tell this incredible story—360-degree cinematography, live action, and 3-D animation," Lipfert said. "The combination of those images with amazing music and sound helped us communicate the beauty of this science."



Jason Bolte, assistant professor in MSU's School of Music, worked with music technology program graduates Luke Scheeler and Jaimie Hensley to compose and realize the show's musical soundtrack.

"We wanted the show to appeal to middle- and high-school students," Bolte said. "So, we tapped two young composers to interpret this story musically. The score combines the actual sounds of gravitational waves with our electronic compositions."

The planetarium team developed the script with the goal of breaking down the complicated science, making it more understandable for a wide audience. Yunes said he expects viewers will take away different things from the show.

"Some will get science out of it, some will get a better understanding of what gravitational waves are and how important they are," he said. "Some will figure out why we do the science that we do and the many benefits that science has to society."

For show times and more information about "Einstein's Gravity Playlist" visit museumoftherockies.org/taylor-planetarium/current-shows-and-showtimes/

Grand Teton Winter Music Festival offers diverse programming Feb. 7-10

GRAND TETON MUSIC FESTIVAL

Grand Teton Music Festival's 2017 Winter Festival encompasses four days of exhilarating musical events at various locations in Jackson beginning Tuesday, Feb. 7 and concluding Friday, Feb. 11 with a concert by the Portland Cello Project—a group hailed for their electrifying genre-bending combination of mash-ups and classical mainstays.

This year's schedule also includes a performance by internationally acclaimed violinist Benjamin Beilman and pianist Andrew Tyson; a free evening of chamber music with festival favorites oboist Jaren Atherholt, bassoonist Benjamin Atherholt, and pianist Andrew Palmer Todd; and a solo recital from the young and prodigious pianist Lise de la Salle.

The schedule also includes a free lecture on the brain's musical processing by cognitive neuroscientist Robert Zatorre at the Teton Country Library.

For more information and to purchase tickets call (307) 732-1128 or visit gtmf.org. Tickets for select events may also be purchased at the Center for the Arts Box Office.

Bozeman Symphony presents musical montage 'Signs of Life'

BOZEMAN SYMPHONY SOCIETY

The Bozeman Symphony presents performances of "Signs of Life" at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4 and at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 5 at the Willson Auditorium in downtown Bozeman.

Featuring the intimacy and richness of the chamber orchestra and a program of diverse musical gems, both performances will begin with composer Russell Peck's playful work for strings, "Signs of Life II"—guaranteed to awaken your senses with an exuberant frolic.

No one could write for woodwinds better than Mozart; and next, the superb wind section of the BSO will warm your heart with his most cherished serenade in E flat major.

After a brief interlude from Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice," the chamber orchestra will conclude with a work that was originally written to help solve a labor dispute with a little creativity and some visual effects, Haydn's famous "Farewell Symphony."

Join Maestro Matthew Savery and the chamber orchestra musicians for a catered reception immediately following each performance, Saturday at Fresco Café; and Sunday at the Legacy Gallery.

Call (406) 585-9774 or email info@bozemansympbony.org for more information.







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Mountain Time Arts receives funding for water-themed public art events

MOUNTAIN TIME ARTS

Mountain Time Arts, a public art organization based in Gallatin County, is one of 29 projects that will receive funding through the ArtPlace America Creative Placemaking Fund. Nearly 1,400 organizations across the U.S. applied for financial support from ArtPlace.

The organization's planned series of provocative, outdoor art installations and performances will celebrate fresh water as it flows from the mountains through farms and communities of the Gallatin watershed to the headwaters of the Missouri River and call attention to the challenges posed by population growth and increasing water use.

Mountain Time Arts debuted the grand scale and creative power of its projects earlier this year, bringing town and rural residents together for two evening performances of FLOW, by Mary Ellen Strom, in which a 90-foot-tall video production was projected onto grain elevators of Story Mill, showcasing the valley's long and rich relationship with water.

Strom called the \$350,000 ArtPlace America grant a tremendous honor and opportunity. "Art, imagination and inspiration can snowball and lead [to] what appear[ed] unsolvable to be recognized instead as achievable," Strom said. "Our goal is to engage residents and communities of the Gallatin watershed in a thoughtful celebration of the watershed's remarkable freshwater sources and spark a constructive conversation about using and caring for this water wisely as the region grows."

The organization has plans for four art events in 2017 that will honor the work of ranchers and irrigators; explore the history and Native American knowledge of the Gallatin Valley's wetlands; consider the past, present

and future of streams flowing through our towns, and ceremonially "send off" the water born and utilized in the Gallatin watershed to those downstream.

Titled "WaterWorks," the project is assembling knowledge about the Gallatin watershed's complex hydrologic systems through ongoing conversations with farmers, irrigators, historians, Native Americans, naturalists, local elected leaders and many other stakeholders who rely on the region's water.

For more information visit mountaintimearts.org.



Artist Mary Ellen Strom transformed the exterior of Bozeman's historic Story Mill grain terminal with large-scale video projections in July 2016. 'Flow' was Mountain Time Arts' premiere project. With its recently awarded grant, MTA is planning a series of public art installations focusing on water conservation. PHOTO BY THOMAS LEE

Locals Fishing Report from Gallatin River Guides

Brought to you by Jimmy Armijo-Grover, General Manager



We've had some good days on the water lately from the Gallatin all the

with Surveyors, Lightning Bugs, Zebra Midges, eggs, worms and more. Swinging smaller streamers and crayfish patterns may also get a few fish to the net and finding an occasional midge sipper wouldn't be out of the question. If you've never accessed the Madison just below Ennis dam I highly recommend it!

For the best shot at dry fly fishing in the area it's hard to beat the Raynold's and \$3 area of the upper Madison. And it hosts some of the biggest and strongest trout in our area. The only challenge is getting there! It's a bit of a haul for most and once you get there you have to find a way to get through the deep snow. Raynold's Pass offers the easiest access, but snowshoes will make it easier. \$3 Bridge requires a hike from the highway that typically requires snowshoes, x-country skis or a snowmobile if you have one lying around. For dries try the CDC Cluster Midge or Silvey's Adult Midge. Subsurface fish small Zebras, Serendipity style patterns, micro mayfly and caddis patterns, eggs and worms





Rainbow Warrior



Silvey's Adult Midge

way to the Bighorn! Sit back and we'll tell you a little about it.

A couple of our guides decided they needed a change of scenery, so they headed east to the Bighorn where the temps are warmer and brown trout are plentiful. They had a great weekend stripping streamers for eager brownies and even nymphed up a few rainbows. If you're itching for something different this might be the place for you and hotel room prices are really reasonable this time of year!

The ice on the lower Madison below Ennis dam has finally broken up enough to make for some good opportunities. Mostly a nymphing game

And finally the Gallatin, which gets the most of our attention fishes like a champ in winter. The best access is going to be from the Big Sky intersection downstream for about 10 miles. That will open up more once we get consistently warmer weather. Pat's Rubber Legs, Tung Surveyors, Zebra Midges, Lightning Bugs, eggs and worms have all been good producers. Still a little early for much dry fly activity, but it will start to pick up soon.

Tight lines! Don't forget to join us for Thursday Night Fly Tying at 5pm.







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The American West has produced some of the most thoughtful and moving literature in U.S. history. Read on and enjoy the Cowboy's Quill: insight into the best writers, books and poetry this side of the Mississippi.

Not in America's backyard

BY DOUG HARE EBS STAFF

"Unearthing Paradise: Montana Writers in Defense of Greater Yellowstone" is an impassioned plea and call to arms to protect our public lands from greed, hubris and unnecessary environmental degradation. This anthology of essays, poems, and short fiction is shot through with righteous indignation and heartfelt arguments against letting multinational mining conglomerates dig for gold at Yellowstone National Park's doorstep.

On a more general level, this collection pits deep ecology against unbridled profiteering, and public interests against private exploitation. "We wanted a chorus giving voice to the mountains and rivers," writes coeditor Max Hjortsberg in the introduction.

There are poems that heighten our appreciation of the region, essays that explore Montana's history of mining catastrophes, and fiction that subconsciously illuminates why we should value pristine wilderness areas more than precious metals.

Too often in the Rocky Mountain West, mineral extraction companies have privatized massive short-term profits and then, when their mine dries up, skipped town and left the public with the bill for cleaning up toxic metals, poisoned waterways and industrial refuse that has ravaged the ecosystem, sometimes irreversibly.

The Berkeley Pit in Butte, Montana, is a prime example of how these corporations rarely seem to be held accountable for the negative impacts that accompany removing megatons of earth for pounds of metal. Edwin Dobb memorably calls this the "perverse alchemy of contemporary capitalism."

The better pieces in the book are more than anti-mining diatribes; they make a strong case for much more accountability, transparency and less myopic decision making from Emigrant, to Helena and Washington, D.C.

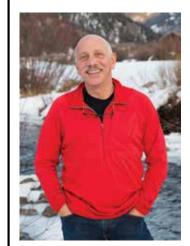
EBS Environmental Columnist Todd Wilkinson writes in the anthology, "I'm not anti-mining ... Creating jobs is important, but creating resilient communities compatible with nature [is] what lasts."

This is a timely book given that the new presidential administration has



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expressed interest in selling off federal lands to private interests. It is also a call to activism.

Without sustained and organized resistance by the people who live around and recreate in the Greater Yellowstone region, large oil, gas and mineral extraction companies will continue to try to commodify places close to the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and the headwaters of the Yellowstone River, without understanding their true worth to the American people.

Give this book a chance and 32 of Montana's most talented wordsmiths will reveal that the aesthetic, cultural, economic and environmental value of the Greater Yellowstone region far exceeds whatever we can get from beneath its surface.

Doug Hare is the Distribution Coordinator for Outlaw Partners. He studied philosophy and American literature at Princeton and Harvard universities.

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Big Sky 2017 WINTER REAL BSTATE **GUIDE**



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Poised upon a hilltop overlooking Big Sky Resort, Cascade Ridge offers luxury ski-in, ski-out, free standing condominiums with a Private Lodge and Concierge Services. Read more on page 6.

CONTENTS

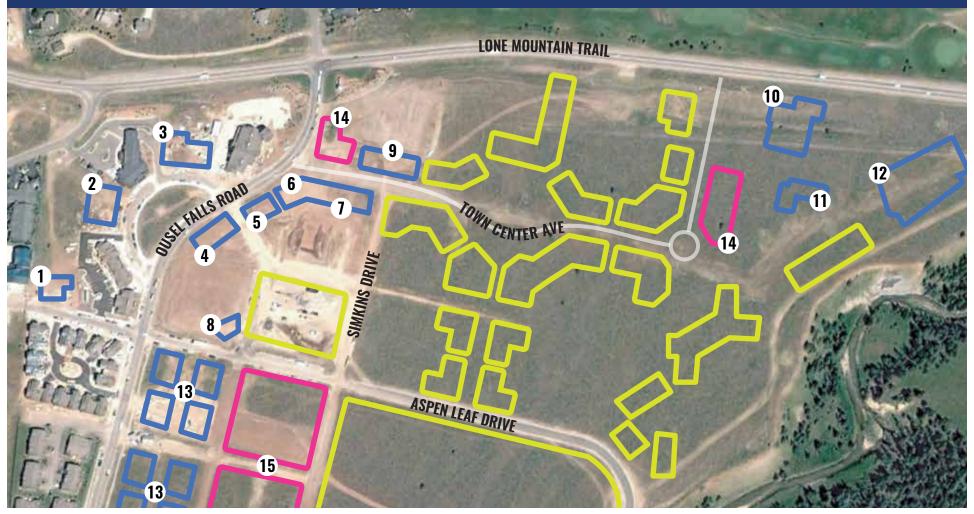
A decade of development in 'downtown' Big Sky2)				
A guide to designing your Montana home					
Montana's agricultural real estate market5					
Another day in Paradise1	1				

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A decade of development in 'downtown' Big Sky

A Google Earth image of Big Sky Town Center circa 2006 with completed development and planned projects overlaid



6. Lone Peak Cinema

7. Building 32*

8. Center Stage

COMPLETED PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION FUTURE PROJECTS

- **1.** Peaks Centre Building 9. 47 Town Center Ave.*
- **2.** Choppers Grub & Pub **10.** Roxy's Market
- **3.** Market Place Building **11.** Peaks Building*
- 4. Alberto's / China Cafe **12.** Big Sky Medical Center
 - **13.** Elevation 6000 Condos

MAPPING ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY GAGE CARTOGRAPHICS

Big Sky Town Center has experienced remarkable growth since its inception two decades ago, and there's plenty more coming. Ryan Hamilton, Town Center's project manager, estimates the area billed by the developer as the place "where big sky comes together" is 40-45 percent built out.

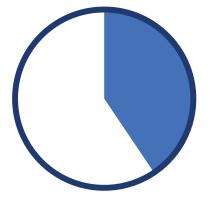
The triangular-shaped, 165-acre property located south of Highway 64 was approved for a planned unit development in 2000. In 2003, Town Center saw the rise of its first project in the Tamarack Court condos. Two years later, Town Center's first commercial space, Big Sky Western Bank, found a home just north of Town Center Park.

5. Clock Tower Building*

14. Under Construction Commercial

15. Under Construction Residential

*Mixed use - commercial and residential



BIG SKY TOWN CENTER IS CURRENTLY

40-45% **BUILT OUT**

More recently, a number of new businesses including Big Sky Medical Center, Roxy's Market and Beehive Basin Brewery have opened up shop at the eastern end of Town Center.

Future development will continue filling in the space between Building 32-home to East Slope Outdoors and other retailers on the lower level and residential units on the upper floor-and Roxy's Market. That stretch of Town Center Avenue, which was conceptualized as a walkable, higherdensity "Main Street" for Big Sky's growing population, will run roughly parallel to Highway 64.

One of those projects is a hotel, which will be built by Lone Mountain Land Company. Details are still being finalized, but Hamilton said community space in the form of a 1-acre plaza is included in the project design. The plaza will complement other common gathering areas like the ice rink, Center Stage, and Fire Pit Park—home to a weekly farmers market during the summer.

It won't be this year, or the next, but when the construction dust settles on the land owned by the Simkins family for more than 40 years, Big Sky just might have itself a downtown. - EBS Staff

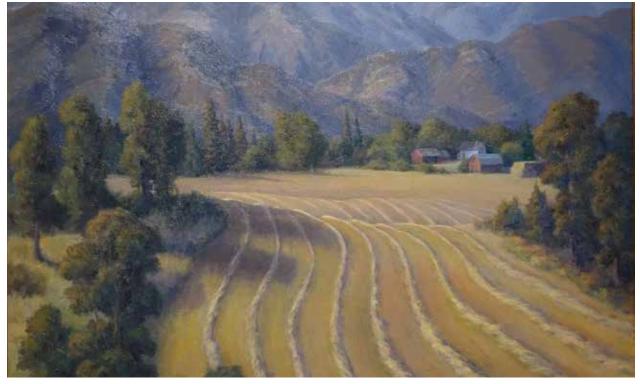
Architect's Wife A guide to designing your Montana home



Designing the interior of your home can be overwhelming. Often we find ourselves with an internal struggle to mimic a particular design period or aesthetic, which can result in our homes losing the most important aspect to design: our own unique style.

Bozeman's own design showroom Architect's Wife, located in the historic Montana Motor Supply building, and its counterpart Abby Hetherington Interiors, are dedicated to bridging the gap from outside inspiration to our own eclectic take on how our homes should be designed, lived in and most importantly, enjoyed.

Interior designer Abby Hetherington understands that imagination not only solves problems, but can also make a unique statement to each home. Hetherington challenges homeowners to trust their own style when it comes to designing a new space. "Don't be scared to design outside of the box," she advises. "Make your home yours, not your neighbor's."



Architect's Wife is a space that allows for conceptual ideas to become tangible, allowing each customer to envision the future of their own space. PHOTO BY SETH NEILSON

The philosophy that Hetherington abides by in her own firm mirrors the carefully curated furniture lines displayed at Hetherington's showroom: Architect's Wife is a space that allows conceptual ideas to become tangible,



providing each customer the ability to feel fabrics, explore textiles, play with room design and envision the future of their own space.

At Architect's Wife, you'll find world-renowned furniture vendors such as Thayer Coggin, Kelly Wearstler, Gamma Italia, Saba Italia, Younger and Cisco Brothersall of these companies believe in the same value of incorporating personal style to high-end spaces.

Saba Italia parallels that same philosophy, but primarily focuses on versatility. Saba does not stop at creating collections aesthetically pleasing to the high-end eye, but fixates on the integrity of their ergonomically designed product.

On their website, Saba describes their work as tailormade for each client: "The Saba collection



Saba Italia's furniture design is guided by the desire to experiment without overstepping the boundary of excess, supported by constant attention to quality and ergonomics. PHOTO COURTESY OF SABA ITALIA

The Kelly Wearstler Collection offers a blend of high-end quality and playful design. PHOTO BY SETH NEILSON

Architect's Wife believes in brands such as Kelly Wearstler, not only for her respected name in the business, but more importantly, Wearstler's ability to achieve a high-end look while simultaneously being playful in her design.

"There has been a false dichotomy that individual style is not synonymous with high-end design," Hetherington says. "I wanted to create a showroom that personifies the necessity for unique décor without having to forfeit clean lines." And Hetherington and her team see that particular ideology in Kelly Wearstler's collection. is based on

functional, modern design, but it also provides the clothing to dress a home in the desires and dreams of those who live there." Offering invisible-tothe-eye slip covering on most upholstered and leather models, and multifunctionality to each design, Saba has been recognized as one of the most innovative furniture lines to date.

The Architect's Wife welcomes the eclectic homeowner with staged vignettes that are layered in personality, allowing each customer to leave with a truly unique piece of furniture, art or décor.

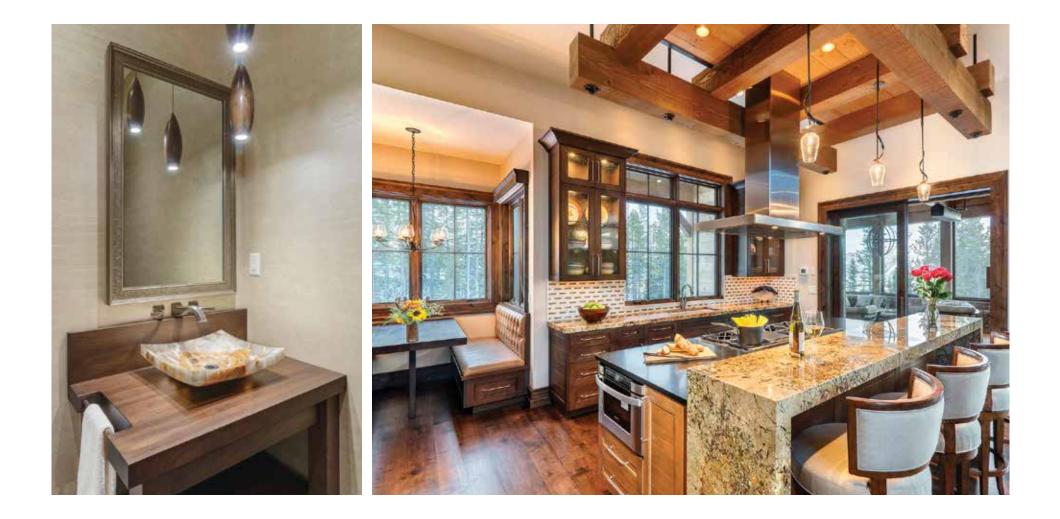
"I want each shopper to experience becoming their own designer, with the help of our educated staff of course," Hetherington says. To learn more about Hetherington and her collected lines, stop by the Architect's Wife showroom to collaboratively transform your Montana home.

Architect's Wife is always available at architectswife.com, or in person at 23 West Babcock Street in Bozeman. Call (406) 577-2000 or visit the store Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Full interior design services are available with Abby Hetherington Interiors at (406) 404-1330, or visit abbybetheringtoninteriors.com for more information.





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Don Pilotte / Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Montana Properties

Montana's agricultural real estate market



As each new year begins, one of Montana's top rural appraisers makes an annual presentation summarizing the previous year's farm/ranch and recreational market, with an emphasis on the sales trends from the previous year.

Clark Wheeler, owner of Norman C. Wheeler and Associates and whose extensive database contains almost 7,000 transactions stretching back over 40 years, prepares his Annual Land Study for the Southwest Montana Farm and Ranch Broker's January meeting.

Wheeler's database of larger land sales shows that in 2016 about 190,000 deeded acres sold, which was down about 16 percent from 2015 when approximately 226,000 deeded acres sold. This compares to 2014 in which about 351,000 acres sold, and 2013 when approximately 223,000 deeded acres sold.



Willow Creek Ranch, near the Rocky Mountain Front and Augusta, Montana, is available at \$1,745,000. PHOTOS BY DON PILOTTE

Prices on a per acre average for those larger sales increased slightly in 2016, with the average price of \$1,665, compared to 2015 when that figure was \$1,426. Looking back to 2014, the average sales price was \$1,146 per acre, and in 2013 the average was \$1,310. These average prices include all of the typical land types commonly found within a large farm or ranch including native range, sub-irrigated, irrigated, dry cropland and forested land.

Most farm and ranch brokers agree that the farm/ranch and recreational market has remained relatively stable during the past four years, compared to the volatile years after the recession began in late 2008. In most of Montana, current land prices are still below the highest prices set from 2006 to 2008.

The value placed on most farms and ranches begins with commodity prices and production, then with recreational value added to that production figure. Location, as well as amenities such as access, privacy, recreation—including hunting and fishing including improvements—all combines to create a value for a specific property.



Diamond Bar 7 is an approximately 2,000-acre working ranch, north of Big Timber, Montana, offered at \$3,795,000.



In Montana, agriculture is a \$4.4 billion dollar industry with about 59.7 million acres involved in production, placing the state second only to Texas. Many people are familiar with only small portions of Montana and don't realize the large role that agriculture plays in the state. There are 28,000 farms and ranches in the state and the average Montana ranch is just less than 2,200 acres, ranking the state number two in average ranch size.

Cottonwood Crossing, a 228+/- acre recreational property, is filled with upland birds, waterfowl and big game, and is offered at \$1,450,000.

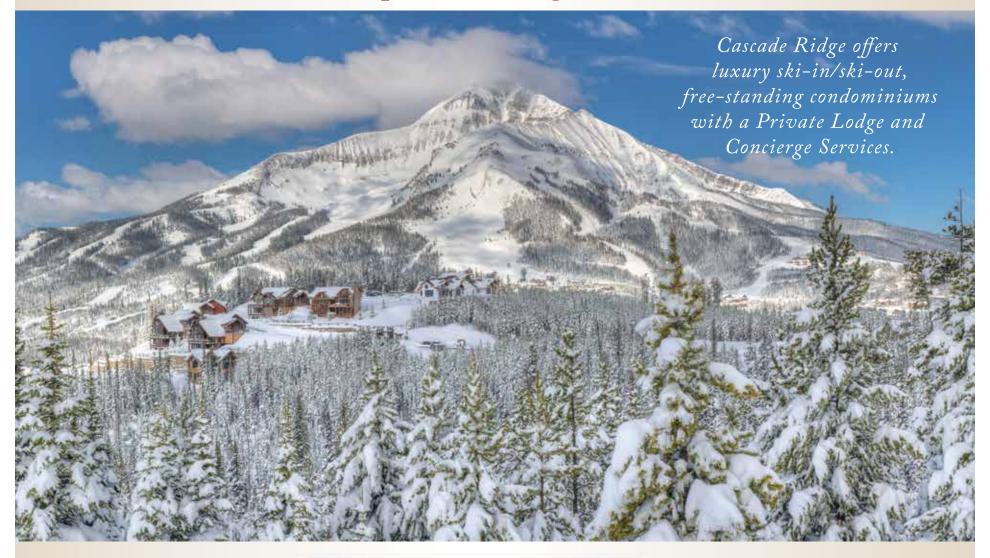
In terms of production Montana ranks first in lentils and organic wheat production; second in durum wheat, dry edible peas, flaxseed, safflower and spring wheat for grain; third for honey production, wheat for grain and all wheat, as well as Austrian winter peas, barley, other spring wheat, canola and garbanzo beans; fourth in winter wheat and alfalfa hay; fifth in sugar beets; sixth in wool production and lamb crop; seventh in calf crop; and 10th in cattle and calves, with 2.7 million animals.

Clearly, agriculture is big business in Montana. But it's often the number of elk, or miles of river or creek frontage, that initiate the calls for farm/ ranch properties, and then we discuss the production and characteristics of the property.

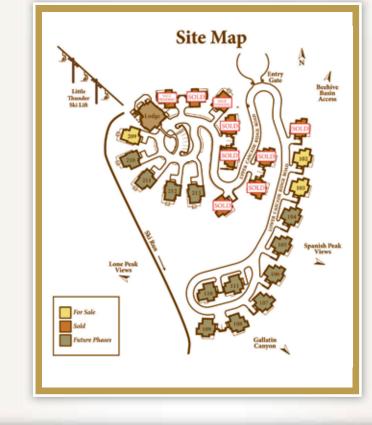
For more information on farms and ranches in Montana, contact Don Pilotte at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Montana Properties in Big Sky at (406) 580-0155, or email don.pilotte@bbbsmt.com.

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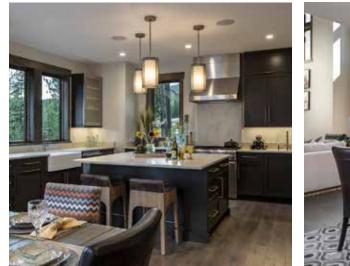


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Another day in Paradise





Ulery's Lake Lot 17 is 20 acres in Moonlight Basin, offered at \$1,350,000 (MLS No. 215952). PHOTO BY STACY OSSORIO

"It's magical." We hear that a lot from visitors to Big Sky.

Well, it is magical here. If you're reading this, you already know. Sometimes we take things for granted and need a reminder of why this place is so special. Sometimes it takes a visitor to remind us.

The fact is that Big Sky is growing by leaps and bounds. It's not because anyone is compelled to be here, it's because so many people choose to be here and want to be here. Many lucky locals have made Big Sky their home. Many lucky visitors choose to make Big Sky their second home, sometimes after their first visit.

So, what is it that causes people to decide to rearrange their priorities to allow Big Sky to become a part of their lives? What view amazes them? Which location calls them into the woods, or to a nearby trail? Which building style strikes a chord? Which of our three club options suits their lifestyle?

There are not many places in the Rocky Mountains that clobber you with such a riveting and dominating alpine view: the silhouette of Lone Mountain on the western horizon.





Camp Arrowhead is a family compound on 25 acres, in Beehive Basin with Lone Mountain Views, and is offered at \$4,995,000 (MLS No. 208912). PHOTO COURTESY OF PEAK PHOTOGRAPHY

That rational desire sometimes leads to irrational, though thoroughly human behavior. The desire to be a part of Big Sky can be captivating and people often choose to belong to something that is unique and vibrant, and they rearrange their priorities accordingly. Fortunately, comprising just over 120 square miles of area—compared to Vail, Colorado's 4.5 square miles—Big Sky offers something for just about everyone.

View from the dining room of 2760 Bobtail Horse Road, offered at \$1,250,000 (MLS No. 217621) PHOTO COURTESY OF PEAK PHOTOGRAPHY

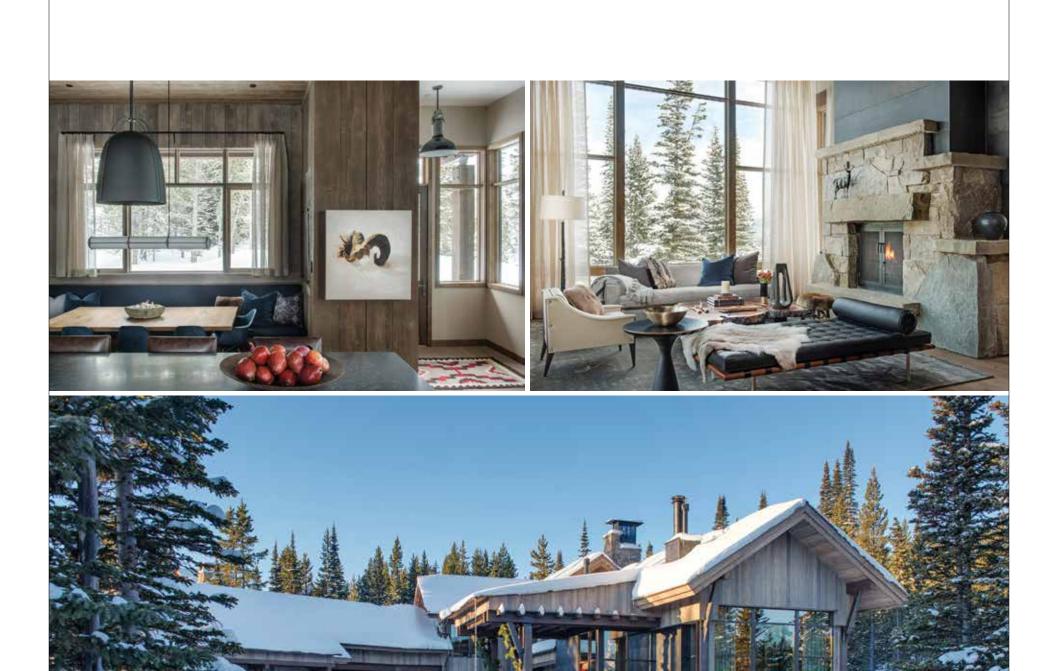
Big Sky is poised for \$1 billion in development investment over the next 10 years. This planned investment is the response to many factors, but can be boiled down to the very rational desire of so many people to enjoy the combination of unparalleled beauty, unparalleled outdoor recreation and the respect of nature reflected in the development of the area.

There are properties to fit all priorities: from condominiums and single-family residences, to fairway-side golf course or ski-in, ski-out lots, and 20-acre and larger tracts. Mesmerizing vistas are everywhere: there are no bad views.

As demand for Big Sky continues to put pressure on the existing built inventory, we see that land has reemerged as an attractive acquisition, allowing for a lower cost alternative to some speculative development and with the opportunity to create one's own vision when the time is right.

Exploring the abundance of opportunities can be daunting, as there are many factors to consider: proximity, neighborhoods, access, topography, and cost of ownership. We have lived here for 25 years and know the lay of the land, and would be happy to help you connect the dots in our growing community.

Stacy and Eric Ossorio are brokers with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Montana in Big Sky, and previously were brokers with Cushman & Wakefield of New York City. For more information, contact Stacy at (406) 539-8553 or stacy. ossorio@gmail.com, or Eric at (406) 539-9553 or eric.ossorio@gmail.com.









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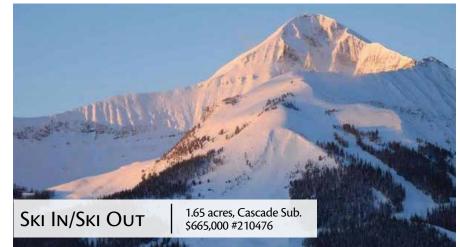


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