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#### **PUBLISHER**

Eric Ladd | eric@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **EDITORIAL**

#### **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, VP MEDIA**

Joseph T. O'Connor | joe@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **LOCAL EDITOR**

Bay Stephens | bay@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **DIGITAL EDITOR, STAFF WRITER**

**Michael Somerby** | michael@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **SPORTS EDITOR / DISTRIBUTION DIRECTOR**

**Doug Hare** | doug@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL & OUTDOORS EDITOR**

Jessianne Castle | media@theoutlawpartners.com

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Bella Butler | bella@theoutlawpartners.com

#### CREATIVE

**LEAD DESIGNER** | Marisa Specht

**DESIGN INTERN** | Michaela Nestelberger

#### **SENIOR VIDEO EDITOR**

Ryan Weaver

#### **LEAD VIDEOGRAPHER**

**Jennings Barmore** 

#### SALES AND OPERATIONS

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER** 

Megan Paulson | megan@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SALES AND MARKETING**

EJ Daws | ej@theoutlawpartners.com

#### MEDIA AND EVENTS DIRECTOR

Ersin Ozer | ersin@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **MEDIA SALES ASSOCIATE**

Sam Brooks | sam@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER**

Blythe Beaubien | blythe@theoutlawpartners.com

#### **EVENTS AND DISTRIBUTION ASSISTANT** Sam Orazem

## CONTRIBUTORS

Linda Arnold, Carie Birkmeier, Alexis Bonogofsky, Wallace Casper, Matt Elsaesser, Jack Garder, Holly Hill, Anna Husted, Kris Inman, Stephanie Lynn, Chris Macdonald, Sara Marino, Scott Mechura, Dave Pecunies, Patrick Straub, Sophie Tsairis, Matt Volz, Mark Wehrman, Christine Gianas Weinheimer, Todd Wilkinson

## ON THE COVER:

Bode Miller, Big Sky's newest resident, making work of the trails that surround the community. Miller and his family are excited to indulge in all of the year-round outdoor amenities the small mountain town has to offer. PHOTO COURTESY OF TETON GRAVITY RESEARCH/LONE **MOUNTAIN LAND COMPANY** 

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With a mission to end cycles of poverty and the trafficking of young women and girls in Nepal through education, Tsering's Fund is set to premiere a 13-minute documentary "Namaste Ramila" in Big Sky.

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## Wyoming temporarily bans Cyanide 'bombs'

Wildlife Services, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, regularly deploys "M-44s," lethal cyanide bombs, to clear wildlife that disrupts farms and ranches, often killing pets and untargeted species as collateral damage. With increases of awareness, citizens are fighting back with policy.

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## PBR makes recycling impact

This past July's Big Sky PBR, considered by those in the sport as some of the best bull riding in decades, also grabbed waste management by the horns, diverting some 1,800 pounds of recycling from landfill, nixing single-use plastic bottles, and accumulating an impressive 37 pounds of trash.

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## Grizzlies: protected, for now

At the end of July, the federal government officially relisted the region's dominant predator, the grizzly bear, back on the endangered species list. But with a fresh appeal from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and joint resolutions from Montana and Wyoming legislatures requesting the U.S. Congress delist the animals looming large, their long-term protection remains unclear.



Traffic backed up for miles along U.S. Highway 191 on Aug. 14, the first day of the Montana Department of Transportation's scheduled Gallatin Guardrail Project which seeks to replace 11 miles of aging guardrail infrastructure. Original estimates provided by MDT alerted commuters to 15 minutes of expected delays, but EBS was inundated by reports of commutes extended by several hours, hobbling businesses and attractions on both sides of the canyon. As of press time, MDT was assessing the project with its contractor and plans to offer fresh solutions. Read more on page 8.

#### **EDITORIAL POLICIES**

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#### **OUTLAW PARTNERS & EXPLORE BIG SKY**

P.O. Box 160250, Big Sky, MT 59716 (406) 995-2055 • media@outlaw.partners

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MARTHA JOHNSON
Vice President of Sales | Founding Broker
THE BIG SKY REAL ESTATE CO.

CONTACT MARTHA: (406) 580-5891 MARTHA@BIGSKY.COM

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**4** August 16 - 29, 2019 **Explore** Big Sky



# Big Hole river experiences seasonal closures

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

An 18-mile stretch of the lower Big Hole River will be closed to fishing during the afternoon each day due to a seasonal rise in water temperatures.

A "hoot owl restriction" will go into effect at 2 p.m. on Aug. 8 from Notch Bottom Fishing Access Site to the confluence with the Beaverhead River. "Hoot owl restrictions" prohibit fishing each day between 2 p.m. and midnight.

This closure is in accordance with the Big Hole Watershed Committee Drought Plan, which calls for restrictions when water temperatures exceed 73 degrees for three or more consecutive days, or when other thresholds are met. Restrictions of this nature are enacted to protect fish species like Arctic grayling, rainbow trout and brown trout, which all become more susceptible to disease and mortality when conditions like low flows and high temperatures combine with additional stressors.

This section of the river will reopen when daily peak temperatures are below 70 degrees for three consecutive days, but no later than Sept. 15.

# MSU paleontology student interns with MOR

EBS STAFF

This summer, a Montana State University student undertook an internship with the Museum of the Rockies. Isabelle Brenes, a senior majoring in paleontology has been volunteering with the museum since her sophomore year.

In her most recent internship, which has been sponsored by the Bureau of Land Management, she participated in a dig in the badlands near Ekalaka, South Dakota. After excavating fossils from the field, Brenes prepared the specimens to be sent to the museum's lab, a process that can take weeks.

"It's a mutual benefit for both the students and the museum," said Scott Williams, MOR paleontology lab and field specialist. "There are a lot of moving parts on a dino dig, and students provide needed help. There's no way we could handle all of it ourselves."

Participating in field work and research at early stages of their careers gives students an opportunity to prepare for post-graduate work.

Brenes, an aspiring paleontologist and the incoming president of the MSU student paleontology club, is grateful for the experience. "The things that have had the most impact for me as a student have been the opportunities that the museum has given me," she said.

# Yellowstone July visitation statistics released

YELLOWSTONE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Yellowstone National Park has hosted 936,062 visitors this July, a .48 percent decrease from July of last year.

This year to date has produced the lowest visitation statistics in the last four years and is just slightly above visitation counts from 2015. The numbers only vary slightly, however, as visitation statistics this year are only down 1.19 percent from last year.

The continued high level of visitation in the park underscores the importance of planning a Yellowstone adventure ahead of time. Visitors should anticipate delays or limited parking at popular destinations, and visitors are advised to check road conditions on the park's website before arrival.

For more data on park visitation, including the calculation process, visit www.nps.gov/yell.

# West Yellowstone to ask voters about increasing resort tax

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** 

The town of West Yellowstone is going to ask voters if they want to increase the resort tax to help expand water and sewer capacity and pay for other infrastructure projects.

The Legislature passed a bill earlier this year allowing resort towns to increase their local option sales tax from 3 to 4 percent to fund specific projects.

Town Manager Dan Sabolsky tells the Bozeman Daily Chronicle if voters approve the tax hike in November, it would raise an estimated \$1.2 million annually. The money would be used to repay a \$28 million bond used to finance a wastewater treatment facility, water storage tanks, new water and sewer lines and reconstruction of streets and sidewalks.

The tax would expire after the bond is repaid in 20 years.

# Fires laying low in Greater Yellowstone this summer

EBS STAFF

This may be the first year in recent memory that Gallatin Valley inhabitants have been spared from choking on smoke upon stepping outside.

In 2018, the Bacon Rind Fire tore through forests approximately 25 miles southeast of Big Sky, spawning fumes that hid treasured Big Sky mountain views for three months. Other sizeable wildfires across the West last year produced similar effects, forcing many towns into fire restrictions and advising limited and cautious physical exertion in the outdoors.

As of mid-August this year, however, the Big Sky air is clear with little to no evidence of wildland fires in the air. Yellowstone National Park has seen four relatively small fires come and go over the 2019 season with one additional fire still actively burning 29 acres near the eastern boundary of the park.

Known as the Pollux Fire, this blaze is suspected to have been started by lightning and was spotted from the Mount Washburn Fire Lookout on Aug. 3. The fire does not pose an immediate threat to trails, backcountry campsites or patrol cabins, but fire managers intend to monitor it and are preparing a management plan to implement if needed.

Just north of Helena, the North Hills Fire was 100-percent contained on Aug. 11 at approximately 5,000 acres. Officials are calling the start human-related and as of Aug. 11.

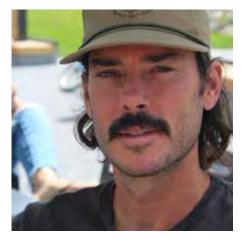


The Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation estimates that more than 80 percent of Montanans participate in some form of outdoor recreation. How do you think outdoor recreation impacts on the environment can be mitigated?



Jordan Sampson and Michael Owen Halifax, Nova Scotia

"Pack it in, pack it out. If you've got to go, make sure you bury it. Leave no trace is essentially our motto. We are believers in repairing gear or maxing it out to the true breaking point. People like to buy the newest and the most stylish gear... you just need to buy one thing. You don't need a bunch of things."



Brad Evans
Seattle, Washington

"The only thing I've really encountered that I think changes the environment a lot are the mountain bikers. I like to hike a lot, and when we are hiking, we always encounter mountain bikers, and it always seems like they're ripping up trails and just being a little bit more irresponsible than the average hiker. I think there needs to be more information in terms of educating people while they're hiking, while they're biking, while they're fishing, to make sure that there are designated areas [where] we are not tramping on the vegetation."



Brian Lunt Chicago, Illinois

"When they build [trails], the more natural products they can use [in construction], whether it's wood, or stone or dirt rather than concrete. I'm never one for more regulations, but you kind of need it to protect the environment—common sense regulations, like taking a canteen instead of a plastic water bottle."



Carolyn Jones
Big Sky, Montana

"You have to educate yourself on how to be a good steward of the environment. Read your local newspaper, read information from the National Parks [Service] and the Forest Service. Also, talking to local outfitters, like Grizzly [Outfitters] and Gallatin Alpine Sports."





## OUTLAW

News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners

## 2019 PBR pushes sustainability to new heights

BY BAY STEPHENS

BIG SKY – This July's Big Sky PBR was not only a success in terms of turnout and competition, but sustainability as well, diverting 1,800 pounds of recycling from landfill and nixing single-use plastic water bottles for eco-friendly alternatives.

And for an event with more than 7,500 total attendees, accumulating only 37 pounds of trash is pretty darn impressive, according to 406 Recycling's Matt Elsaesser, who oversaw recycling operations for PBR.

While cardboard and plastic were taken to 406 Recycling's headquarters in Helena, aluminum landed at the Belgrade branch of Pacific Steel and Recycling. Compostable cups will be ground up by a local composter to become soil and the 903 pounds of glass captured at the event will go to a cement plant in Montana City, which uses the crushed material as a substitute for sand.

"I like glass because it's an inert material," Elsaesser said. "It's heavy to transport but has a lot of recycling value," especially due to the global sand shortage reported by NPR, he added.

Similar to the successful diversion of plastic cups at the Peak to Sky Festival in earlier in the month, 406 Recycling used PVC pipes to encourage audience members to pour out liquids and stack their cups upside down, saving on volume and decreasing contaminants collected with the plastic.

"The quality control we got recycling was very good," Elsaesser said. "The cleanup crews set aside recycling for us to pick up and the vendors were breaking down boxes [to save on volume]."

As far as Elsaesser knows, he devised the cup stacking system and it's unique to 406 Recycling.

"One neat thing is when you look back at those volumes, there wasn't a lot of plastic bottles," Elsaesser said.

That was deliberate, according to Outlaw Partners Media and Events Director Ersin Ozer.

"Our goal [was] to significantly reduce single-use plastic water bottles at our events this summer, and we [partnered] with local community leaders to find solutions," Ozer said.

In lieu of plastic water bottles, Outlaw teamed up with the Gallatin River Task Force, Big Sky Rotary Club and Montana Silver Springs to provide aluminum, reusable water bottles for both Peak to Sky and Big Sky PBR.

Together, GRTF and Rotary organized and ordered 900 28-ounce h2go Surge aluminum refillable water bottles, which were sold near water refill stations at both events by the organizations' representatives.

"The Gallatin River Task Force was thrilled to partner with Rotary on this important issue of sustainability for our community," GRTF Director of Development Ryan Newcomb said. "Sustainable solutions are key to water conservation efforts and both protecting and stewarding the Gallatin Watershed as a whole."

Blair Mohn, secretary of the Big Sky chapter of Rotary and chair of the organization's sustainability committee, was excited the water bottles came together so quickly and thinks more can be done in Big Sky.

"People want sustainability here," Mohn said, adding that working with Outlaw to supply the water bottles is just one of many steps rotary intends to carry out to push forward green initiatives in the local community. "People want to preserve the integrity of Big Sky's natural beauty."

Montana Silver Springs, based in Philipsburg, Montana, also donated 50 cases of their aluminum bottled water—1,200 bottles—for Outlaw's summer events.

Nolan and Cathy Smith have bottled beer in aluminum resealable bottles since opening Philipsburg Brewing Co. in 2012, but began bottling high-alkali spring water in the same style of containers in Oct. 2018.

"I just think it's important to raise people's awareness about plastic in our environment and if our bottles are [at these events], it puts the issue at the forefront of people's minds," Smith said in June.

Aluminum has the only true closed loop recycling process, meaning that aluminum cans can be melted down and made into new aluminum cans indefinitely, rendering it one of the most versatile recycling materials out there.



## OUTLAW.

## News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners



406 Recycling's Matt Elsaesser developed the PVC-pipe mechanism that encouraged Big Sky PBR attendees to empty and stack their plastic cups, significantly reducing the volume the containers take up. PHOTO BY MATT ELSAESSER



The Gallatin River Task Force and Rotary Club of Big Sky partnered with Outlaw to sell reusable water bottles at Big Sky PBR instead of single-use plastic water bottles. PHOTO COURTESY OF GALLATIN RIVER TASK FORCE



Montana Silver Springs donated 50 cases of their high-alkali resealable aluminum bottled water for Outlaw Partner's Peak to Sky concert and Big Sky PBR, eliminating the need for single-use plastic water bottles at both events. PHOTO BY SOPHIE TSAIRIS





## MDT installs new guardrails in Gallatin Canyon

## First day delays five times what expected

#### BY BAY STEPHENS

BIG SKY – The Montana Department of Transportation began installing new guardrails in the Gallatin Canyon on the stretch between Moose Creek Flat Campground and the Hellroaring Trailhead on Aug. 15. Though they told drivers to expect 15-minute delays on top of normal traffic delays, the reality on the first day was five times that.

As of press time on Wednesday, Aug. 14, EBS received multiple reports of commutes extended by upwards of 1 hour, 15 minutes, making what normally would have been an hour commute for some into a 2 hour 15 minute drive.

MDT officials said on Aug. 14 that they visited with contractors in the canyon to assess the backup and address causes for the extended delays, but did not immediately respond to requests for comment on new approaches to ease the traffic flow or compensation for commuters and businesses affected by the delays.

Completion is scheduled for Nov. 15, though delays may occur depending on weather and other factors, MDT said.

Construction on the 11.2-mile stretch of US Highway 191 is scheduled to take place on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., though MDT District Administrator William Fogarty said in a statement on Aug. 8 that crews are planning to perform the bulk of the work between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to accommodate peak travel times on the heavy commuter route.

Working in 1-mile segments, construction crews will replace guardrail beginning at Moose Creek Flat moving toward Hellroaring Trailhead. MDT originally broadcasted that commuters should expect average delays of 15 minutes in addition to delays from normal traffic.

"If it normally takes you 1 hour and 15 minutes during rush hour to travel through highway 191, you would plan for 1 hour and 30 minutes," Fogarty said on Aug. 8.



Due to US Highway 191's proximity to the Gallatin River, Montana Department of Transportation had to acquire special permits that mandated replacing the guardrails when the river is flowing at its lowest, beginning in late summer, to minimize impact to the channel.

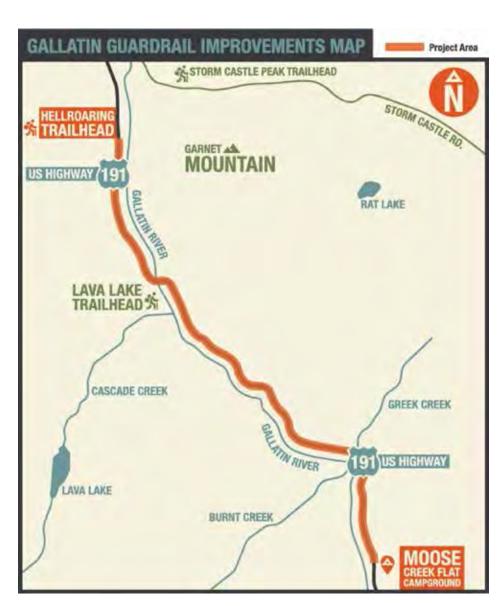
A pilot car is facilitating traffic through the single-lane closures. Fogarty requests that drivers remain patient, observe signs and flaggers and drive safely through the project area. If drivers want to avoid delays entirely, he advised traveling the canyon before 7 a.m. and after 7 p.m.

"This is a narrow corridor and no one wants to get hurt—workers and drivers alike," Fogarty said.

According to the MDT project website, 29,000 linear feet of existing guardrail sections will be replaced with "new guardrail to meet modern standards by using stronger materials." Crews will also raise the height of the guardrail, perform erosion stabilization efforts in 17 locations to bolster the effectiveness of the guardrail at keeping vehicles on the roadway.

Fogarty said the timing of the project is impacted by the proximity to the Gallatin River, requiring MDT to obtain special permits to work adjacent to an active channel, permits that restrict construction to periods of low flow.

Guardrails have played a substantial role in protecting lives in the Gallatin Canyon and across the state, according to the project website: Of the 39 single vehicle roadway departure crashes in the canyon between Jan. 1, 2009 and Dec. 31, 2013, 26



resulted in guardrail collisions.

At this point, the Big Sky Transportation District isn't modifying bus schedules for Skyline and Link to the Peak routes, according to David Kack, district coordinator and program manager for the Western Transportation Institute. He doesn't expect the delays to affect the bus schedules too much, but added that they won't know for certain until construction is in full force.

"If those delays get to be pretty significant, we'll have to adjust to make sure people make it to work on time," Kack said.

Weather will play an obvious role in the project's timely completion.

"Snow is a big factor in this corridor," Fogarty said. "If there is a lot of snow in October and November, it could push the project back. However, MDT is confident that the work can be completed by the end of the year, before winter sets in."

EBS will be updating this article online at explorebigsky.com as information becomes available.

Michael Somerby contributed in the reporting for this article.



Guardrails effectively keep vehicles on the road and out of the river, but as this segment shows, vehicles striking the guardrails can bend them back as well as loosen the dirt around the posts so that they need to be replaced. PHOTOS COURTESY OF MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# BSRAD clarifies stance on alcohol and tobacco: Tax them like everything else

#### BY BAY STEPHENS

BIG SKY – In their Aug. 14 meeting, the Big Sky Resort Area District board made clear their intent to subject alcohol and tobacco to resort tax, reasoning they are not "necessities of life" that are exempt from the tax, but rather fall under the umbrella of "luxuries" designed to be taxed in a resort tax area to provide relief for the local population.

"We're trying to be equitable and fair," said Sarah Blechta, BSRAD treasurer. "I personally do not believe that alcohol is a necessity of life, I believe it's a luxury. I also believe that tourists buy it and locals buy it."

Frank Kern, owner of the Hungry Moose Market and Deli, and Renae Schumacher of the Big Sky Conoco Travel Shoppe presented a petition signed—at both their businesses, as well as at the Big Sky Exxon and The Cave Spirits and Gifts—by 652 private individuals who didn't want alcohol sold at grocery and convenience stores to be taxed. Big Sky residents comprised 376 signees, with the remaining 190 residing outside of Big Sky or in another state.

Currently, the 3 percent resort tax is only levied on booze sales at establishments where alcohol is formally served, such as bars and restaurants.

"We are ending up taxing locals and we are impacting local businesses and we are doing something we haven't done for 27 years, maybe because of confusion, but we haven't taxed," Kern told the board. "So we put up a petition asking people if alcohol and tobacco shouldn't be [taxed]."

Schumacher echoed Kern, telling EBS after the meeting that she doesn't think the change would bring in much more resort tax because alcohol and tobacco operate on slim margins. Her concern is that the shift misses the intended purpose of resort tax.

"This will hit locals and transient workers who can't live up here because there's no housing and they can't afford to live here," Schumacher said. "They're going after the wrong subset of people."

This discussion falls in the midst of the board's revision process of the ordinance that defines what should and shouldn't be taxed. The primary goal of the revision process is provide clarity about what is subject to tax, for the sake of businesses that remit the tax and for compliance.

The draft ordinance includes a new section outlining the purpose of resort tax, the cornerstone of the rest of the document, according to the board, and they intend to align any other items in the ordinance with this section, including alcohol and tobacco.

At this point, the board has determined that the purpose of resort tax is to tax goods and services sold to tourists and transient visitors, but which locals and other members of the general public may also purchase, luxury items, exempting any necessities of life.

"This is clarification," board chair Kevin Germain said of the move toward taxing the goods. "I do think there was intention and we're just trying to clean it up. The tobacco [is] new because tobacco and alcohol go hand in hand when you're talking about these things. If you're taxing alcohol, how can you argue not to tax tobacco?"

The board also pointed out that, though alcohol sold for off-premise consumption has not been taxed, it should have been starting in 2015 when the last ordinance revision to that aspect took place, stating that "all alcoholic beverages" are subject to resort tax.

"I helped write this, so I can tell you what the intent was and what I still believe it says," board director Mike Scholz said. "It says, 'all alcohol."

Depending on interpretation, review of the past ordinances indicate that all alcohol sold in the district should have been taxed beginning as far back as 2002, potentially leaving 17 years-worth of resort tax on alcohol sold in grocery and conveniences stores uncollected.

The board said part of this oversight is likely because of an eight-year period prior to 2011 when they conducted no audits. According to the board, the 2015 ordinance change was supposed to make the wording clear enough to remit tax on all alcoholic beverages in the district, but a 2017 audit revealed that the change was universally disregarded, leading to the current attempts to clarify, and enforce, the ordinance as it relates to taxation of alcohol.

Scholz also pointed out that the tax is designed to hit the contract workers commuting into Big Sky, helping to pay for the emergency and law enforcement services.



Resort tax has never been collected on alcohol sold at grocery and convenience stores, but that may have been a mistake the past 17 years. PHOTO BY RYAN WEAVER

"That little extra on their tallboy or whatever, is the little bit they pay for that protection, and that was one of the reasons we were able to get [resort tax] through the legislature," Scholz said.

"We're only applying to you the same criteria we apply to everything else," Sholz told Kern and Schumacher. "Do tourists buy it? And if they buy it, we think it should be taxed. It was quoted in the [Lone Peak Lookout] as a sin tax. It's not a sin tax. It's a tourist tax."

The board added that it's time alcohol and tobacco pull their weight for the community in financial terms, considering numerous issues the substances usher in for many in Big Sky.

"There are clearly impacts on our community—public health and safety, law enforcement, whatever you want to say—resulting from the use of alcohol and possibly tobacco as well," BSRAD Vice Chair Steve Johnson said. "And we have no compensation for that and that's part of the purpose of resort tax, is to tax things that have an impact on our community that we can otherwise not fund."

Although not happy with the board's stance, Schumacher and Kern expressed their support of resort tax and its process.

"I'm just glad they're at least giving us a chance to voice our opinion," Shumacher said. "And locals can speak up too if they don't want alcohol to be taxed. In the end we'll collect and remit the tax however they want to do it."

#### In other news:

- The board discussed adding an appeals process to the ordinance that would allow businesses to ask BSRAD staff for clarification as to whether specific goods and services should be taxed, and appeal to the board if they don't like the answer.
- The board approved bonds allocated during the 2019/2020 allocations meeting in June: \$500,000 for the Big Sky Community Organization's BASE Community Center and \$414,185 for Gallatin County 911's radio network based on Lone Mountain.
- The board is waiting on responses from a survey the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce has distributed among its members as to how beneficial a "tax holi day," a period in which resort tax isn't collected in the shoulder seasons, would be to area businesses.
- The board approved a request from the Big Sky Community Housing Trust to
  use a portion of the funds allocated for the 2019/2020 fiscal year to pay off debt
  from the first phase of the Meadowview Condominiums development, of
  which all 18 units are under contract for sale but have not closed because they
  are awaiting Fannie Mae approval of the HOA.

The board will do an official first reading of the revised ordinance on Sept. 10. Visit resorttax.org for more information on how to get involved in the revision process.

## Big Sky Chapel celebrates 20 years



The Big Sky Chapel today hosts three congregations. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

#### BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – In 1992, Terry Mumey placed an ad in the Lone Peak Lookout. The headline read: "Comments and suggestions wanted: Year-round Inter-faith Chapel Big Sky."

Prior to the ad, a small group of Big Sky residents had identified a need for an official chapel; meeting in random rooms around town wasn't sufficing the growing community anymore, and something had to be done.

"We were like a bunch of gypsies, going here and there for church," said Marty Pavelich, a founding board member of the Big Sky Chapel.

The year that followed the Lookout ad, a community committee was formed to carry the dream to fruition. They rallied support from people all across town, and eventually the momentum reached a critical mass. In 1995, Everett Kircher, founder of what is today Boyne Resorts, donated the current site of the chapel to the effort. The founding board, comprised of seven, including Pavelich, focused on fundraising and planning over the next three years. Tim Blixseth, co-founder of the Yellowstone Club, donated land to be sold to fund the chapel project and challenged Ted Turner to match his contribution. While Turner never took the bait, Blixseth's offering was monumental in the initial stages.

On Mother's Day of 1998, despite not yet having fulfilled funds, the board broke ground on the donated land. Pavelich said he knew when construction started, people would start to fill in the gaps—indeed they did. On a plaque in the chapel today, among a list of monetary donors is a list of "in kind" donors: individuals who couldn't contribute dollars but instead offered services such as excavation and landscaping the distinguished rock garden.

The following Mother's Day, the very first board of directors hosted a dedication ceremony, and the elegant doors of the Big Sky Chapel were opened.

"It was meant to be an intimate chapel for the community," said Dick Landis, former chapel president. Landis, Pavelich and fellow founding board member Brad Lartigue believe this mission has been and continues to be satisfied, even after 20 years. The chapel is home to three denominations, two of which employ full-time pastors, and has hosted a range of community events such as piano recitals and holiday celebrations.

The intention to be inclusive is supported by tangible evidence. Upstairs, the ornate stained-glass windows refract tinted beams of light along the corridor that leads up to a wide window that frames Lone Mountain. In designing the church, it was decided to leave out symbols and depictions of a specific religion in order to achieve a space fit for all. One window even features a fly-fishing fly, something to which most Montanans can relate.

The church and its view were the envy of communities across the state. Prior to the building's completion, the Billing's Gazette ran a story titled, "New Big Sky Chapel built with God's country in view" and with a lead that read, "Heaven would be lucky to have views as nice as those that will be enjoyed by congregations at the Big Sky Chapel."

In building the chapel, Lartigue said everything was brand-new. In an effort to introduce character, founding board member JoDean Bing acquired used pews in Minnesota, now near 115 years old. The board chose to omit cushions from the seating so that the creaks could be heard as people stood and sat on the antique wood.

"Looking back on these 20 years, I feel like we absolutely accomplished our goal of what we wanted this to be," said Lartigue, who was echoed by Pavelich and Landis.

On Aug. 25, the Big Sky Chapel will host an open house and barbeque from 1-4 p.m. to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the chapel.



Chapel on Mother's Day, 1998. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BIG SKY CHAPEL



The view of Lone Mountain from the Big Sky Chapel was the envy of the state before the building was completed. As the Billings Gazette put it, heaven would be lucky to have the view the chapel boasted. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER



A 1998 cover of The Weekly in Big Sky shows the steeple being placed atop the new Big Sky Chapel.



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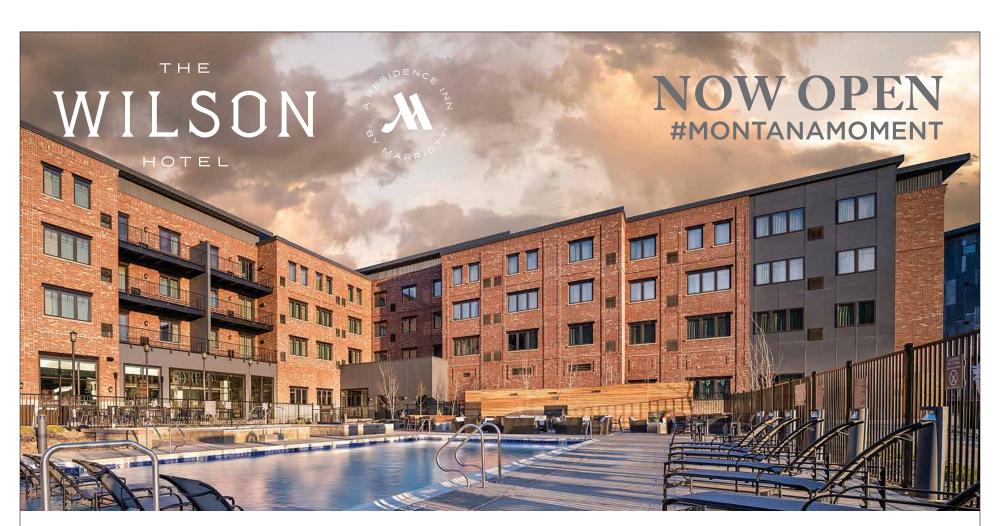
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## **Transportation District general manager retires**

#### BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – After 18 years of being Big Sky Transportation District's sole employee, Richard Shultz retired in late July. Shultz began serving the district as the general manager in 2001, when the only bus line in Big Sky was the Snow Express, only offering limited services during the winter.

BSTD has since expanded from offering service three months out of the year to 12, with two bus lines—the Skyline and the Link Express—transferring riders all around Big Sky as well as to and from Bozeman.

Shultz recalls the major transition period for BSTD coinciding with the addition of David Kack as BSTD coordinator in 2003. The district underwent large-scale changes in order to be eligible for grants and federal funding. During this period of growth, Kack said Shultz was instrumental.

"Richard was invaluable in the transition," Kack wrote in an email to EBS.

Shultz credits his influence on the district to having been the only hands-on, eyes-on person in the field. Although Shultz was charged with general operations and supervising, it wasn't uncommon to see his famous grin behind opening bus doors. In addition to overseeing drivers and evaluating ridership, Shultz often drove routes in the summertime. He was no stranger to the Skyline's bike racks and would often hop out at each stop to help riders load their bikes.

"I'll miss all the passengers I've gotten to know over the years," Shultz said.

Shultz said he's also sad to leave behind the camaraderie and community among the Skyline and Link Express drivers, but he is excited for the new opportunities retirement presents.



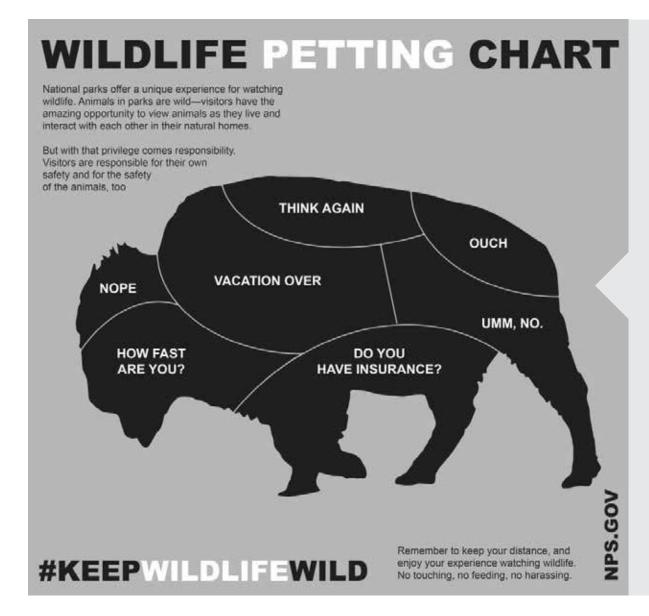
Richard Shultz and his wife, Nazha. Shultz will retire after serving as the general manager of the Big Sky Transportation District for 18 years. PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD SHULTZ

"It may sound silly, but I'm excited about getting to all the things that get ignored around my house," he said.

He also looks forward to spending time with his youngest son, Yasin.

Although no one has yet been hired, Schultz' position will be filled by a Kart Stage "mountain manager," who will conduct much of the work Shultz did, though under a contract, according to Kack. Kack expressed gratitude for Shultz's time with the transportation district.

"It will be hard to imagine the service operating without him around."



# How to pet wildlife: Don't.

In the wake of a 9-year-old girl getting launched into the air by a bison in Yellowstone National Park in late July and the goring of a teenager in North Dakota by a bison less than a week later, a video of a man petting one of the hulking mammals from a boardwalk in Yellowstone went viral on Aug. 7, eliciting rebuke from park officials. The following day, the National Park Service posted this witty and sarcastic graphic of a "wildlife petting chart," underscoring that keeping a safe distance from wildlife not only protects humans but also wildlife. "Know the risks of getting too close to wild animals and how to avoid them," the Facebook post read. **GRAPHIC COURTESY OF NPS** 

## Hail, rain, wind from storms cause damage in Montana

HELENA (AP) – Some Montana residents were cleaning up Monday after a series of thunderstorms brought large hail, heavy rain and strong winds that downed trees and power lines and damaged buildings and vehicles.

The National Weather Service reported the worst damage on Sunday in Shepherd, Worden and Huntley—north of Billings—where hail up to 2 inches in diameter fell, causing damage to homes, outbuildings, vehicles and windows.

A roof was torn off a house and a barn was destroyed in Worden, The Billings Gazette reports. In Ballantine, hail tore up siding on a house and knocked a tree over on another.

Sugar beet crops were sitting in water in Yellowstone County while leaves were torn from corn stalks near Ballantine, the Gazette reported.

Golf ball-sized hail fell Sunday in downtown Billings, breaking windows and damaging lightbulbs and neon lighting at the Babcock Theater.

Lightning is believed to have caused a fire in the attic of a Great Falls residence Sunday morning at a time the National Weather Service recorded 55 cloud-to-ground lightning strikes within five minutes.

"It was a lot more lightning with this one than we normally see, especially with cloud-to-ground strikes," said meteorologist Ray Greeley. The weather service also recorded 1,000 cloud-to-cloud strikes during the same five-minute period, the Great Falls Tribune reports.

Helena reported .99 inches of rain on Sunday, a record for the date. On Saturday, Townsend residents reported golf ball-sized hail.

"There's people with gutters punctured through from the big hail, gardens annihilated—it's pretty bad," said Cathlene Millay, who told KTVH-TV she's assessing damage to the paint on her house.

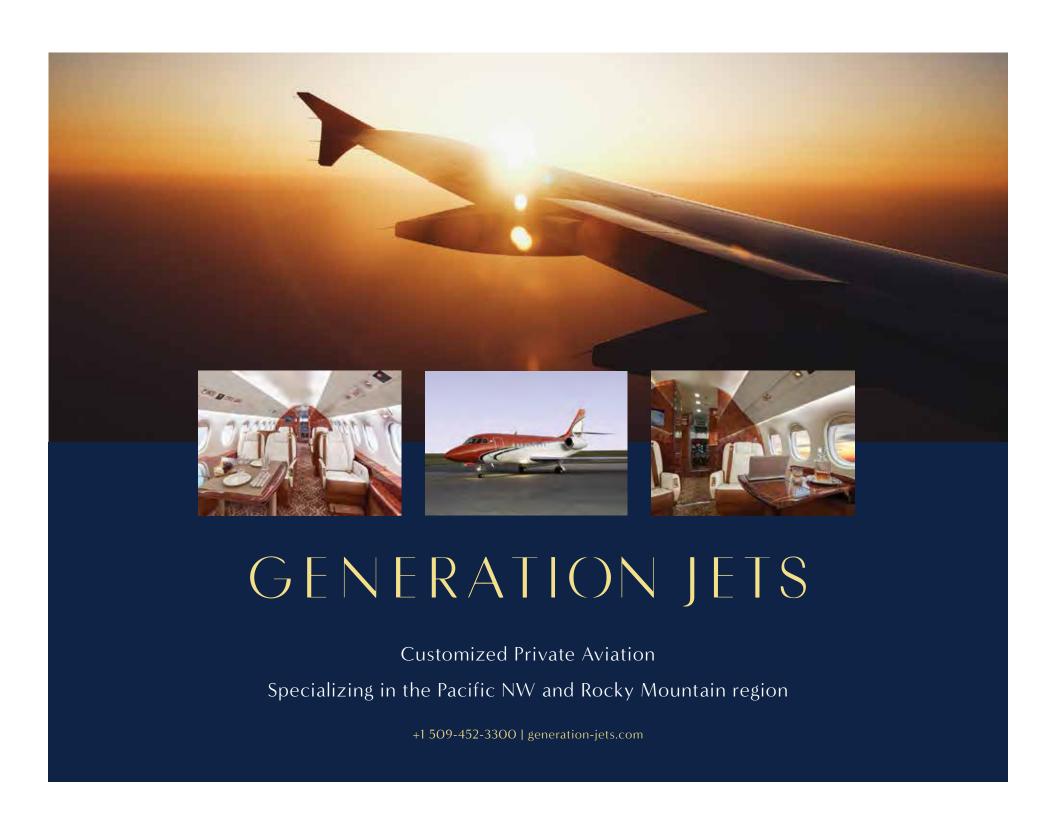
On Saturday evening, strong winds caused five sailboats on Flathead Lake to crash into rocks near Polson Bay. Lake County authorities rescued six people and a dog. Two of the boats were banked and flipped over into the trees, the sheriff's office said in a Facebook post. State Auditor and Insurance Commissioner Matt Rosendale urged residents to document property damage before beginning any cleanup or repairs, take steps to prevent further damage, and then contact their insurer to get the claims process started.

He recommended getting multiple bids for repair work and checking documentation of contractors.

The rain helped crews make progress on fires in western Montana. A blaze north of Helena was 100 percent contained, while a fire near Lincoln was hit with about an inch of rain and was 50 percent contained.

Crews created a fire line around 20 percent of a fire north of Missoula after about a half-inch of rain fell over the weekend. Firefighters were removed from the lines by mid-afternoon Sunday due to the incoming storms.

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## Appeals court upholds Montana campaign disclosure law

BY MATT VOLZ ASSOCIATED PRESS

HELENA (AP) – An appeals court on Monday upheld a Montana law requiring nonprofit groups to register with the state as political committees if they run any kind of ad that refers to a candidate or ballot issue within 60 days of an election.

The three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that it's in the state's interests to have such disclosure requirements, even for groups that run ads that don't expressly endorse or oppose a candidate, but still aim to indirectly influence voters.

The state law requires any group to register and file disclosures once it spends \$250 or more on ads or mailers referring to a candidate, political party or ballot issue within 60 days of an election

That includes as educational and social-welfare committees registered as nonprofits under section 501(c)4 of U.S. tax law that generally aren't required to disclose their donors and spending.

The law was passed in 2015 in response to the 2010 Citizens United U.S. Supreme Court decision that allowed corporations to spend unlimited amounts of money on ads in elections if they don't coordinate campaigns.

The National Association of Gun Rights sued in 2016 to strike down the state law. The 501(c)4 group said it wants to send mailers to voters about public officials who support or oppose the Second Amendment ahead of the 2020 elections, but it did not want to register as a political committee

and make the required disclosures to the state.

The group argued unsuccessfully that the U.S. Constitution bars states from requiring that kind of disclosure for informational ads, such as the kind it proposed mailing. The First Amendment only permits states to impose such regulations on "express advocacy" ads—those that directly appeal to voters to cast their votes for or against a specific candidate, attorneys for the gun-rights group said.

The 9th Circuit judges ruled the provisions in the Montana law are similar to those the appeals court previously upheld in Washington state and in Hawaii.

"Montana's disclosure requirements for political speech that mentions a candidate or ballot initiative in the days leading up to an election reflect the unremarkable reality that such speech—express advocacy or not—is often intended to influence the electorate regarding the upcoming election," Judge Marsha S. Berzon wrote in the 9th Circuit opinion.

The judges struck down one part of the law that required organizations that register in Montana to designate a treasurer who is a voter in the state.

David Warrington, an attorney for the National Association of Gun Rights, said he was happy that the court ruled in their favor on the treasurer provision, and that a decision hasn't been made on whether to appeal the rest of the ruling.

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SECTION 2: ENVIRONMENT, OUTDOORS, & HEAITH







## THE NEW WEST

# Ultra-lethal cyanide predator poison banned in Wyoming, for now



## BY TODD WILKINSON EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

Most Americans are probably unfamiliar with the federal government's taxpayer-subsidized killing campaign carried out every year against public wildlife on public lands, most of them located in the West.

Most are likely unaware that their hard-earned money, paid in taxes to Uncle Sam, helps to op-

erate a federal agency known as Wildlife Services, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. One of Wildlife Service's primary missions is functioning essentially as a protection hit squad for privately owned cattle and sheep producers allowed to graze their animals on public land grass at rates that haven't risen in over half a century.

While most citizens are outraged when they learn what Wildlife Services does, they are furious when they discover that one of the weapons Wildlife Services and its state affiliates use to wipe landscapes free of predators is ultra-lethal cyanide "bombs" known as "M-44s" that could also kill a human or pet if they came in contact with them.

In fact, a teenage boy from Pocatello, Idaho, nearly died a few winters ago after he and his pet dog wandered into an M-44 placed by a Wildlife Services trapper near their suburban home. The dog bumbled into the M-44, got a dose of cyanide sprayed in its face and then died, foaming at the mouth, in the boys' arms.

The same year, two pet dogs were killed by M-44s outside Cheyenne, Wyoming, the state capital. That prompted Brooks Fahy, founder of Predator Defense, along with several other wildlife conservation and animal rights groups representing millions of members, to again seek a nationwide ban on using M-44s.

In 2017, U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio of Oregon, a Democrat, drafted a bill that would do just that, but it got nowhere when Republicans held a majority in the House of Representatives. Today, Democrats are in charge in the House and DeFazio's bill has gained momentum.

Wildlife Services has been under intense public scrutiny for decades, taken to task for the death tolls of animals it proudly notches, the accidental killing of "non-target species" including imperiled wildlife, the deaths of pets, and several close calls involving outdoor recreationists and dogs who happened upon M-44s and traps.

Few Americans realize that Wildlife Service agents still use fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters to fly over vast swaths of the West gunning down coyotes so that ranchers on public lands don't have to contend with them at calving and lambing time.

Meanwhile, on the ground, agents lay down a lethal gauntlet of traps and snares, "fumigants" and sometimes even pour gasoline down the dens of unwanted predators and then set them alight, burning alive not only adult animals but also their pups.

For a long while, Wildlife Services dodged accountability and transparency, refusing to divulge public records about its activities knowing that it always had lawmakers from the West who would defend it.

Last year in Wyoming, Wildlife Services claimed official responsibility for killing 6,231 coyotes, 51 wolves, 148 red foxes and other animals, though many believe that's a grossly low estimate. It also doesn't include the fact that wolves,



A coyote roams Wyoming. Under a new court settlement, the federal agency Wildlife Services is temporarily prohibited from using ultra-lethal cyanide bombs to kill coyotes on public land in order to protect privately owned cattle and sheep. PHOTO COURTESY OF JACOB W. FRANK/NPS

given their controversial "predator status," can be killed in roughly four-fifths of the state 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by any means—even techniques that animal welfare experts would claim to be torturous—no questions asked. Notably, coyotes are treated with even less regard.

All of these relates to an ecologically illiterate mindset that begins and ends with Wildlife Services and its allies. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department, which claims to be guided by best modern practices in professionally stewarding wildlife, turns a blind eye when it comes to the deeds of Wildlife Services.

Why? Out of fear it will alienate state lawmakers who fund it. Game and Fish and members of its governing wildlife commission seem to condone the practice of running down coyotes with snowmobiles, which has been widely condemned by leading hunters' organization as barbaric and unethical. Still, Game and Fish and its commissioners are afraid to speak out, even on principle.

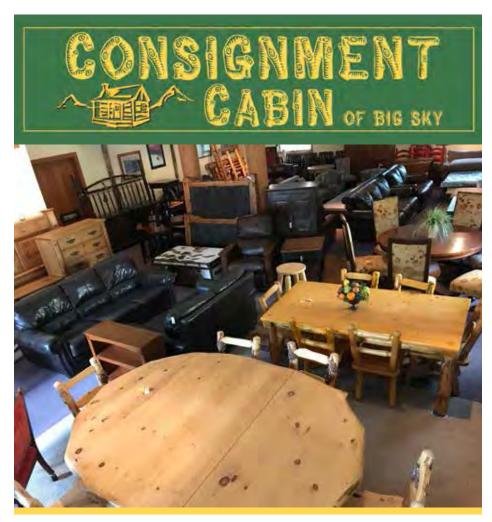
This week in Wyoming, a state where a wide range of horrors have been documented since the 1960s, including snowmobilers running down coyotes with their sleds "for sport," a court settlement has struck a blow against Wildlife Service's use of M-44s.

Under the agreement, Wildlife Services, in addition to temporarily prohibiting M-44s, must provide by Jan. 8, 2021 an environmental analysis of the effects and risks of its wildlife-killing program in Wyoming.

In the wake of a wide array of challenges brought against Wildlife Service's tactics, field personnel working for the agency also can no longer set neck snares and traps in places where grizzlies are known to live.

"It's past time for the government to stop killing predators for the sake of the livestock industry," said Erik Molvar, executive director of Western Watersheds Project. "While the settlement is a temporary reprieve for native wildlife, we hope that taking a hard look at the program will reveal the ineffective and dangerous aspects of these activities, resulting in permanent protections." Wildlife Services did not respond to requests for comment for this column. Todd Wilkinson is the founder of Bozeman-based "Mountain Journal" and is a correspondent for "National Geographic." He's also the author of "Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek" about famous Jackson Hole grizzly bear 399, which is available at mangelsen. com/grizzly.





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## Volunteer for collaborative river cleanup Aug. 29

BY STEPHANIE LYNN AND HOLLY HILL **EBS CONTRIBUTORS** 

Calling all river lovers. The Gallatin River Task Force and Gallatin Watershed Council will host the first volunteer effort to pick up trash along the Gallatin River from the headwaters to the valley on Thursday, Aug. 29 at 2 p.m.

Headquartered in Big Sky and Bozeman respectively, the Task Force and GWC have organized annual events to remove trash from popular Gallatin River access points over the past seven years. For the first time, the two watershed groups will tackle the full length of the river on the same day with the goal of engaging 150 community members to gather one ton of trash from the Gallatin.



A selection of discarded items found during last year's Gallatin River cleanup. PHOTO BY

"Participating in a river cleanup is one way that citizens can do their part for the river we all love," said GWC Coordinator Holly Hill. "We're excited to partner with the Task Force to amplify all of our efforts in stewarding the Gallatin River."

This year, conservationists can choose from two concurrent meetups conveniently located in both Big Sky and Gallatin Valley. Big Sky-area residents will gather at the Big Sky Community Park river pavilion while Bozeman-area inhabitants will assemble at Simms Fishing Headquarters in Four Corners. After receiving supplies and assignments, volunteers will disperse from their rendezvous sites to high-traffic river access points to pick up trash. Participants will reconvene at 5 p.m. for after parties located in Big Sky and Four Corners.

The 2019 river cleanup is supported by American Rivers, Big Sky Area Resort Tax District, Map Brewing, L & L Site Services and Roxy's Market.

Across the country, rivers have become repositories for trash discarded from cars or dropped by recreationists and carried downhill by wind and water. The nonprofit conservation organization American Rivers addresses this challenge by coordinating and resourcing river cleanups across the country through their National River Cleanup program, including the Gallatin River Cleanup. Over 57,228 volunteers removed two million pounds of trash from nearly 3,166 cleanup sites last year according to their website.

Participants in the national program have unearthed crazy items, including a plastic raven statue, mannequin head, disco ball, blow torch, cash register and household appliances, while local volunteers recovered treasures such as a homemade PVC pipe wading staff, fishing gear, a hub cap, kiddie pool and road work sign. Each year, cleanup organizers are left questioning the source of this surprising trash.

"In our experience, recreationists do a pretty good job of keeping the Upper Gallatin clean," said Task Force Executive Director Kristin Gardner. "However, the road is a major contributor of trash to our river."

Help to keep trash out of local waterways at the Gallatin River Cleanup. Volunteer in advance to be a cleanup leader and recruit a team of four to six people. Cleanup leaders can request a cleanup assignment and will be accommodated on a first-come, firstserved basis.

Email stephanie@gallatinrivertaskforce.org for more information and to express interest.

Stephanie Lynn is the education and communications coordinator for the Gallatin River Task Force. Holly Hill is the coordinator for the Gallatin Watershed Council.



## **BEAR BASICS WITH BERNADETTE**

DO YOUR PART, BE BEAR SMART

## **Culvert traps**

## BY KRIS INMAN EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Last month an article about a bear being captured and removed in Bozeman brought concerns regarding the humaneness of the use of culvert traps. We at Bear Smart Big Sky are glad to hear these concerns because this means that you, like us, care about bears.

To answer these concerns, I want to share how culvert traps work.

These traps are similar to a large culvert. Open on one end with a ramp and door, they are rigged so that once the bear pulls on the bait, the door is triggered and closes. They are long enough that a bear has to move to the end of the culvert-shaped tube before it can reach the bait. Also, the door closes quickly, well before the bear can make it back around to the door. Both the length of the trap and the quickness of the door work in concert to reduce the risk of the bear being injured by the door. Culvert-type traps are the safest method to use for bears and the public. All traps have bedding and water containers in them for the bear's welfare.

That said, why would a bear be captured in a culvert trap anyway? There are two possible reasons.

The first is for wildlife research. Wildlife biologists capture, radio-collar and release bears back into the wild to answer questions that protect and conserve them. I've worked on several such studies. Data about the number of cubs born, how many bears die, and what they died from is used to predict population trends and drive management decisions for both black bears and grizzlies.

The second reason to trap bears arises when bears and people have interacted negatively, like the case of the bear that was removed earlier last month. In these cases, a bear is captured and relocated or euthanized based on the bear's history, behavior and the conflict situation.

The frequency of human-bear interactions is increasing and relates to the growing popularity of wild areas. The population of Gallatin County has doubled since 1990 and has grown three times faster than the entire state, as reported by Headwaters Economics. Madison County to the west is not far behind.

As the urban meets wildlands, bears are adjusting quickly. They find trash and open garages lead to a more consistent food source than what nature provides.

Bears searching out trash usually follow the availability of natural food. In a drier year, trends in conflicts tend to increase when natural food sources like berries and grasses are scarcer. This year, where precipitation in the Big Sky area is ranging from 135-230 percent of normal, based on an Aug. 7 report by the Montana Natural Resources Conservation Service, we would expect to see bears return to the readily available wild food sources. And some do.



Researchers with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team who oversee monitoring and research on grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone prepare to lift a tranquilized bear out of a culvert trap and onto a tarp for data collection. PHOTO COURTESY OF USGS

However, according to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks bear specialist Kevin Frey, "Higher quality natural foods like berries can be sporadic and generally diminish before bears are ready to den for the winter. Bears are opportunistic, and will return to 'easy' food sources like garbage and birdseed if they are available.

Once bears receive this food reward over and over again, it is very difficult to change their behavior."

In Big Sky, over 70 percent of homeowner associations require that their homeowners and visitors use a bear-resistant trash can, reports Ben Holst, Bear Smart Big Sky Council member.

This is a step in the right direction. Frey says it will require consistent use of bear-resistant trash cans to break the cycle of habituated bears in Big Sky before we see the end of culvert traps. It is a day he and the Bear Smart Big Sky Council look forward to.

For roughly \$6 more a month, you can have a bear-resistant trash can. Become an ambassador for change and help move us into this next era of protecting and conserving bears. Do your part and be bear smart.

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

Kris Inman is the community partnerships coordinator for the Wildlife Conservation Society and oversees the Bear Smart Big Sky campaign.

## **Grizzly relisting is official**

#### EBS STAFF

During the last week of July, the federal government formally completed the paperwork that returns grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to the endangered species list following U.S. District Court Judge Dana Christensen's ruling last September. With this move, the bears once again join the five remaining Lower 48 grizzly populations as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act, and have been placed back under federal jurisdiction.

While paperwork was only just completed, Christiansen's ruling immediately handed management decisions from the states of Montana, Wyoming and Idaho back to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who oversees grizzly bear recovery efforts throughout the Lower 48.



In 2017, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delisted the Yellowstone population, citing a rebound from about 136 bears in 1975 to an estimated 700 and saying the population had met delisting criteria. Several environmental and tribal groups filed lawsuits over the delisting, ultimately winning with Christiansen's 2018 rule.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently seeking an appeal of the Missoula judge's decision. Meanwhile, earlier this year, Montana and Wyoming lawmakers passed joint resolutions asking the U.S. Congress to introduce legislation that would delist grizzly bears.

NPS PHOTO

# >> WILD PLACES AND OPEN SPACES <<

## Recreationists cautioned to balance use with conservation

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – In many ways, Montana may be considered the flagship for wild places in the United States. With just over a million people spread out across nearly 150,000 square miles, there is a bountiful offering of wide-open spaces with exceptional access to entertain sportsmen and women of all kinds.

In Gov. Steve Bullock's second campaign, he made it a priority to protect the land privileges enjoyed by recreationists in Montana, running largely on a public lands platform. When in office, he followed through on the promise and established the Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation, making Montana the fourth state to establish such an office.

Based in the Montana Governor's Office for Economic Development, MTOOR is a one-employee operation run by director Rachel VandeVoort, a native Montanan who grew up in Whitefish and graduated from the University of Montana.

Each state's office of outdoor recreation hones their focus on priorities and missions that satisfy their state's unique needs. For Montana, that looks like fostering continued growth for outdoor recreation, which VandeVoort says is an essential and critical segment of not only the Montana lifestyle, with over 80 percent of Montanans participating in outdoor recreation, but also its economy.

"[The] outdoor recreation economy is a significant contributor [to Montana's economy overall]," VandeVoort said. Citing figures from the 2018 MTOOR Economy Report, she noted that 10 percent of all Montana jobs are directly related to outdoor recreation. The report also concluded that the outdoor recreation industry accrues \$7.1 billion dollars in consumer spending and generates \$286 million in state and local taxes.

Looking through an economic lens, growing the industry can only mean a stronger state economy, which in turn translates to higher standards of living for Montanans and more opportunities for prosperity within the state.

However, increased recreation in fragile natural climates may seem like a "Catch 22." As the economy trends upward with the growth of the industry, the health of Montana's environment could potentially see a reversed outcome. As VandeVoort pointed out, there is no such thing as a type of recreation that has no impact.

As the outdoor recreation industry expands and consequently so do the repercussions to the environment, a divide has surfaced between conservationists—those looking to preserve the land—and recreationists who prioritize heavy use.

In an essay published by "High Country News," Ethan Linck writes the narrative of this rift, claiming that blurring the lines between recreationist and conservationist is misguided. He poses this question: "Can outdoor recreation really support conservation for the long-term health of the land, not just human access?"

Linck's argument is that the conservation that recreationists believe they are participating in is actually born out of self-interest; people will fight to protect something if they have a vested stake in it. To Linck, this is what distinguishes a recreationist from a conservationist, the latter being someone who he believes views the environment with the absence of anthropocentric perspective and honors the intrinsic value in nature.

## "as we see more and more impacts, I hope that people will start to look at the intrinsic value of our wild lands and see that value alone as meaningful,"

Randy Carpenter, project manager for the nonprofit organization Future West, hopes attitudes will shift toward thinking about what is best for nature.

"As our population grows ... as we see more and more impacts, I hope that people will start to look at the intrinsic value of our wild lands and see that value alone as meaningful," he said.

VandeVoort does agree that participating in outdoor activities does not inherently make you a conservationist of that place solely based on that interaction with nature. Despite recognizing the partition between the two acts, she also suggests that in our current world, conservation and recreation cannot exist exclusively from each other.

"[Conservation] takes time and energy and effort and money to maintain," VandeVoort said.

According to the MTOOR director, the outdoor recreation industry has the resources to support conservation efforts in a way that otherwise wouldn't be possible; a portion of MTOOR is improving outdoor recreation infrastructure and access with a focus on stewardship and conservation. She also believes that allowing people the opportunity to experience the outdoors instills in them a passion for those outside spaces and a desire to protect them. This concept is often known as "place attachment" and has been debated as a sound theory by many.

With outdoor recreation playing such a large role in Montana's culture and livelihood, it will not likely dissolve from the region anytime soon. However, in order to meet environmental needs spurring from rapidly increasing use by recreationists, the Montana outdoor recreation industry and those that it serves may need to "practice restraint," as said by Carpenter.

The question remains as to what these restraints look like and how large of a push they must be. Carpenter pointed out that there are a great deal of impacts by recreationists that have yet to come to light, so determining solutions is an especially challenging feat.

An example VandeVoort offered up is the Smith River permit system, which limits the number of floaters allowed on the prized Smith River in the central part of the state.

The solution to growing the outdoor recreation industry responsibly is thus far inconclusive, but VandeVoort and Carpenter both believe it must include a balance of respecting conservation efforts and honoring the role that outdoor recreation plays in Montana.

# >> WILD PLACES AND OPEN SPACES <<

## **Preserving quintessential Montana**

## Interest in conservation easements grows

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

BOZEMAN – As you leave the mouth of the Gallatin Canyon, headed north toward Bozeman on a glowing summer eve, the magnificence of Gallatin Valley opens like the bud of a wild rose. Open pockets of private land on the upper segments of the Gallatin River through the canyon, as well as the wide reaches of undeveloped soil in Big Sky, are similarly captivating.

E.J. Porth describes this open landscape as quintessential to Montana, something nostalgic and sentimental that evokes a deep sense of self and place.

"For a lot of people, the open landscape is something that's a little bit of an abstract idea," she said. "It's a feeling you have being there."

The open space is something residents of Gallatin Valley truly care about.

Porth, the communications and outreach director for the Gallatin Valley Land Trust, says the phones have been off the hook since county voters passed a levy to refund the Gallatin County Open Lands

Program last June. The tax increase that finances conservation easements in the county won overwhelming support by voters and was recently used to create a conservation easement on nearly 600 acres west of Belgrade.

The first project to draw on these funds, the easement was completed through a partnership between the Flikkema family and GVLT. Like all conservation easements, terms of this agreement will run with the title of the land and limit development and subdivision, thus ensuring the open landscape remains so in perpetuity.

"There is a ton of interest [in creating conservation easements]," Porth said. "Landowners realize the community cares and wants this."

The Flikkemas were unavailable for an interview with EBS, however brothers Clarence, Gary and Ted Flikkema said in a GVLT press release, "We grew up on this farm. We were taught the value of hard work, land management, an appreciation of farming and how it benefits others. As we grew older, we saw expansion in development of housing and subdivisions on farmland. Our wish is for this farmland to remain as it is."

Montana Land Reliance Southwest Manager Jessie Wiese said her land trust that works throughout all of Big Sky country is also seeing increased landowner interest. In all, MLR has conserved 1.17 million acres since efforts began in 1978.

"Driving from Big Sky to Bozeman, it's hard to miss how many pieces of farmland have disappeared over the last five or 10 years," Wiese said. "Now is the time. People are starting to see how rapidly development is taking place."

A conservation easement, facilitated by land trusts like GVLT or MLR, conserves working landscapes, scenic views and fish and wildlife habitat through a voluntary agreement with landowners. The property remains in private ownership; however, the landowner gives up development rights in order to see to the long-term preservation of the land.



A view of the West Creek Ranch in Paradise Valley, which has been preserved with a conservation easement by Montana Land Reliance. PHOTO BY ALEXIS BONOGOFSKY

Through the process, the property is appraised and the development value is assessed. Because the land will lose what Porth calls the fair market value of development rights, the landowner is typically compensated to some degree. Porth says landowners often donate a portion of the value, while public dollars make up the remainder through programs like the Gallatin County Open Lands Program or the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program administered through the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

This compensation is usually paid out in a lump sum, Porth says. She likened the process to the landowner selling their right to build or subdivide. Without the development rights, the land loses value, though the landowner is paid some portion of that value up front.

Porth added that conservation easements are different from easements that grant public access, and it is still up to the property owner whether to allow anyone on the ground.

While land trusts aim to protect open spaces and scenic views, a significant portion of that is conserving agricultural properties and thus preserving the ranching and farming heritage.

"There will always be a need to grow food," Porth said. "Lots of animals move through the landscape and don't know the boundary between public and private land. They use the whole landscape.

"Farmers and ranchers are really incredible stewards of the land," she added. "It is in everyone's best interest to keep these working landscapes because we know [the rancher or farmer] cares about the land."

Weise added to this, saying that open space ensures clean water and provides important habitat for threatened species like sage grouse. Conservation easements can keep species off the Endangered Species List, she said.

"Private land is important for public land. We really need these wide-open spaces that are part of the wildlife complex in order to keep our public lands healthy," Weise said. "There's an intrinsic value to it. It's keeping Montana the way it is."







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## Reason #21

Our People - First Security Bank would like to congratulate Big Sky branch president, Tim Kent. Tim was awarded the Business Person of the Year Award at the Big Sky Chamber Black Diamonds and Dinner event earlier this week. Tim was recognized for all his work in the community and more recently, his efforts with the Big Sky Community Housing Trust and tackling affordable housing issues in Big Sky. Discover the 100's of reasons why your neighbors choose First Security Bank.

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# INSIDE YELLOWSTONE



## **Commemorating 60th Anniversary of Hebgen Lake Earthquake**

BY CHRISTINE GIANAS WEINHEIMER **EBS CONTRIBUTOR** 

This month marks the 60-year anniversary of the most famous earthquake in the Greater Yellowstone area. It was the strongest ever recorded in the Rocky Mountains and tragically took 28 lives.

On Aug. 17, 1959, the Hebgen Lake Earthquake, measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale, triggered a massive landslide that moved at 100 miles per hour. In less than 1 minute, more than 80 million tons of rock crashed into a narrow canyon, blocking the Madison River and forming Earthquake Lake.

The U.S. Forest Service's Earthquake Lake Visitor Center, located 59 miles southwest of Big Sky on Highway 287, tells the story of that infamous event. It not only features excellent exhibits, but visitors can also easily see the effects of the earthquake surrounding them: The visitor center itself sits atop the landslide debris and overlooks the lake formed by the quake.

The visitor center's exhibits illustrate the magnitude of an earthquake's power and the devastation it leaves behind. They include displays on earthquake science and a kid-friendly, interactive 3-D model of the Earthquake Lake area.

When visiting, be sure to check out the working seismograph that monitors earthquakes worldwide. If you're lucky, you'll even experience how an earthquake registers on the Richter scale, in real time, whether it is close by or far away. Greater Yellowstone is one of the most seismically-active areas in the United States, with a combination of tectonic and volcanic activity resulting in 1,000 to 3,000 earthquakes each year. Most of these quakes are too small to be felt.

Also within the visitor center, a Yellowstone Forever Park Store, operated in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, offers a variety of educational items. Outside, a walking path leads to the Memorial Boulder that honors the 28 victims of the quake.



The Earthquake Lake Visitor Center offers exhibits and displays that illustrate what happened 60 years ago when the Hebgen Lake Earthquake tragically took 28 lives. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE **CUSTER GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST** 

When you arrive, pick up a "Visitor Guide to the Earthquake Lake Geologic Area" and check the upcoming times for scheduled movies and talks.

The Earthquake Lake Visitor Center is open daily from late May through mid-September, and admission is free. Check the Custer Gallatin National Forest website at fs.usda.gov/detail/ custergallatin for exact dates and hours of operation and directions.

The Custer Gallatin National Forest is hosting a series of events at the Earthquake Lake Visitor Center through August 18 to remember the earthquake of 1959 and its victims. For more information on 60th anniversary events, call the center at (406) 682-7620.

Christine Gianas Weinheimer lives in Bozeman and has been writing about Yellowstone for

## FWP, stakeholders continue discussion of the Madison

## Ambassador program proposed to reduce conflict at access points

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

BOZEMAN - The Madison River is known the world over for the chance of hooking aggressive rainbow or burly brown trout. Locals know how the wind can scream over the water, but many an angler cherishes memories of that sacred moment when a fly connects them to a fish in the secret pockets of the Madi.

River rats know the allure of the Madison too—the Madison is a destination river float, attracting families, tourists, college students and more.

But with such popularity, recreationists and managers continue to tango with questions of crowding and conflict and how best to steward the river.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks reports that between 1984 and 2017, angler usage has increased by more than 300 percent and during that time, anglers have increasingly expressed dissatisfaction with river crowding, traffic at access sites and conflict among users.

Mac Minard, the executive director of the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association based in Montana City near Helena, said he and his wife have experienced issues at Fishing Access Sites firsthand. Whether it's a site user who blocks the launch point while they rig up a boat, or someone who doesn't park their boat trailer in the correct spot, Minard says it can be a frustrating start to a trip or a sour note at the end.

"It's not a matter of people being mean," he said. "It's a lack of education."

Earlier this year MOGA hired a statistician to assess FWP's river satisfaction surveys and according to Minard, "There is no technical basis to support overcrowding [on the river]." Instead, he said in about 70 percent of complaints, the issue was at the fishing accesses.



in July. This site is a popular take-out spot for recreational floaters. PHOTO COURTESY OF MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

With this in mind, and with support from many of the association's fishing outfitter members, MOGA proposed an FAS Ambassador Program to the department in July. This program, which is also endorsed by the Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana, would place a seasonal staff person from FWP on-site at some of the most popular accesses on the Madison to direct parking and traffic flow.

"This is an example of collective thinking. We want to solve a problem and do it in a way that would be positive for everyone," Minard said, adding that the program could also be used

Fisheries Chief of Staff Eileen Ryce said that while the department won't be able to implement the program this year, they will look at options for next season.

This program comes on the heels of a year fraught with disagreement over regulations concerning the Madison River, which has been an ongoing focus of FWP efforts to address crowding and conflict throughout the past 60 years. After the disbanding of a stakeholder committee in May tasked with recommending actions to FWP that would address these challenges, the department is more or less back to the drawing board.

While unwilling to discuss FWP's stance on any new regulations, Ryce said to stay tuned and that "we're definitely continuing to look at it."

She added that in addition to considering the FAS Ambassador Program, the department is developing outreach efforts that promote boat ramp etiquette to immediately address concerns over conflict at access points.

In an Aug. 7 press release, FWP reported that roughly 3.9 million visitors utilize the 330 Fishing Access Sites in the whole of Montana, and whether recreationists are there to fish or float, it's up to users to be polite, respectful and courteous in order to keep the sites open and enjoyable.

#### **SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB**



Royal Coachman Ranch 160 ACRES / \$5.9M



Lot 38 Bitterbrush Trail 1.27 ACRES / \$800K



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

## **MOONLIGHT BASIN**



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211 B Pheasant Tail \$720K



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

## **UNDER CONTRACT**



Hill Condo 1277 790 SQ FT / \$299K



Hill Condo 1361 440 SQ FT / \$179K



Moui 120 A

#### **BIG SKY - LAND**



Lot 4 Beaver Creek 20 Acres / \$539K



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



Lot 3 Joy Road 6.83 Acres / \$395K

## **BOZEMAN & GREATER MONTANA**



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



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



640 A

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Yellowstone Ranch Preserve List Price: \$19M

**SOLD** 

Big Sky Corner Property List Price: \$3.24M



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

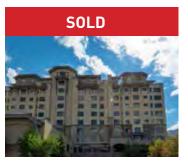


Crail Ranch Unit 40 List Price: \$1.35M

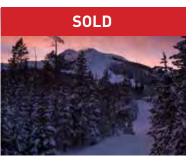


Black Eagle Lodge Unit 30 List Price: \$1.35M

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Summit 911/912 List Price: \$595K



Lot 39 Diamond Hitch 1 ACRE / \$595K



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



118 Rose Hip Circle 1,940 SQ FT / \$489K



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



25 Lower Dudley Creek 4,076 SQ FT / \$1.65M



ntain Meadows cres / \$3.495M



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



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



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



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



Lot 2 Big Buck Road 20 ACRES / \$480K

#### COMMERCIAL



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



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



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



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



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



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



Osprey Cove Lakehouse List Price: \$1.25M



2078 Little Coyote List List Price: \$1.079M



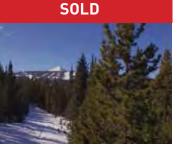
Ski Tip Lot 10 List Price: \$975K



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



Lot 64 Goshawk 1.04 ACRES / \$775K



Lot 63 Silverado Trail List Price: \$390K



Lot 113 Crow Point Rd. 2.59 Acres / \$335K



Lot 40 Half Moon Court .81 ACRES / \$325K



Lot 16 Andesite Ridge .756 ACRES / \$259K

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## **Crail Ranch Trail**

#### BY SARA MARINO **EBS CONTRIBUTOR**

The Crail Ranch Trail is a 2.6-mile roundtrip, leisurely path that traces the historic Crail Ranch Meadow, named after Big Sky's original settlers. The flat, gravel surface is welcoming to any ability or type of trail user. You can access the trail by parking either at the Big Sky Community Park off Little Coyote Road, or at the Crail Ranch Homestead Museum on Spotted Elk Road.

Be sure to leave time for a side trip to the museum. Guided tours are offered on Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 3 p.m. through September. The grounds are open every day during daylight hours for self-guided walking tours and picnicking.

The newest feature, the Crail Ranch Native Demonstration Garden, is now in full bloom. Big Sky's first garden project has emerged through collaborative efforts among the Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance, Gallatin River Task Force, Big Sky Water and Sewer District, the Historic Crail Ranch Homestead Museum and Big Sky Community Organization.

The garden is an outdoor classroom that showcases more than 700 native, wildlife-friendly and water-wise plants. The outdoor classroom will be used as an instructional tool for residents, visitors and students and will help our community understand that beautifully landscaped gardens can be sustained in a water-challenged environment. Water meters have been installed to track how native plants save water over

time. There are also community vegetable garden beds that can be reserved for use by contacting Kimberly at crailranch@bscomt.org.

Hop on the Crail Ranch Trail and take a trip back in time and try to imagine what Big Sky was like those many years ago, while enjoying efforts made to keep it sustainable for the future.

For more information about Big Sky's parks, trails and recreation programs, visit bscomt.org. The Big Sky Community Organization engages and leads people to recreational and enrichment opportunities through thoughtful development of partnerships, programs and places.

Sara Marino is the community development manager for the Big Sky Community Organization.



roundtrip



bike



Difficulty Easy

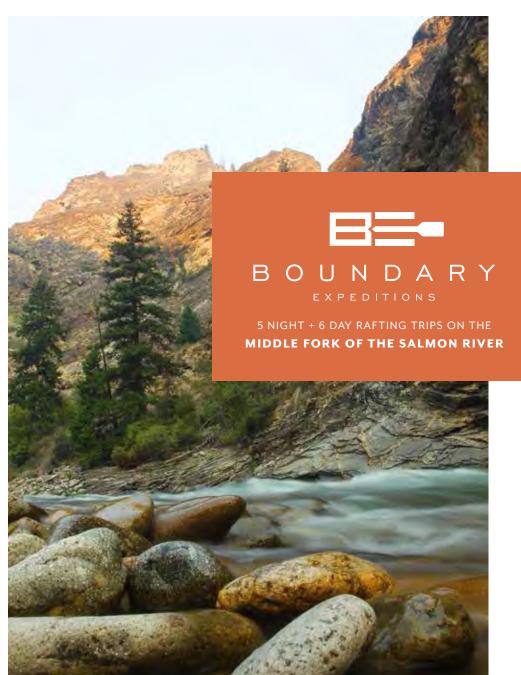


6,285 feet



Surface Gravel

**Directions:** From Meadow Village, head north on Little Coyote Road. Travel past the Big Sky Chapel and turn onto the first road on your right. Look for the Big Sky Community Park entrance sign and turn right. The trailhead is immediately on the left-hand side and there's parking near the softball fields.



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# The biggest fly fishing mistakes, and how to solve them



BY PATRICK STRAUB EBS FISHING COLUMNIST

A local angler who fishes more than 200 days a year told me the other day that he was struggling to catch fish as easily as he did earlier in the summer. My response, albeit a tad adolescent, was, "Well, duh—it's late August."

The next few weeks serve up some of the year's most challenging fishing. Low and clear water, a lack of abundant hatches, water temps climbing in the afternoon causing fish to feed less, and fish that have seen a good amount of angling pressure for several months combine to make for tricky fishing conditions. With that comes the need to tighten up your angling game. Here's some help.

Early on and early off. If people call these days the "dog days of summer," imagine how a river-dwelling trout feels late in the afternoons. Low and clear water mean that trout are more sensitive to light refracting into the water than they are earlier in the season. Counter this by fishing during the hours of the day when light and water temperatures are more conducive to active trout.

Slow down. With the early wake times required for angling success, stretching the last bit of sleep out of your night will be challenging. But the slow down begins the night before—get to bed early so you can wake up early and be ready to hit the water fresh and focused. Once you're on the water, take your time. Fish feed more cautiously in late summer, so stalk a stream slowly, eyeing every possible feeding location. Be meticulous with your rig, as minor adjustments make a big difference.

**Sweat the small stuff.** In my younger angling days I scoffed at micro-split shot, the advantage of fluorocarbon, the various types of floatants, and other tackle adjustments. However, as fish become more selective, how your fly is presented is more crucial. Micro-split shot allows for minor changes in a deep nymph rig. For example, a feeding trout may not be willing to move to a different depth to eat your fly, so you have to adjust to get to the right depth.

When fishing dry flies, understand which floatants work the best. Visit my Aug. 4 column for the breakdown on floatants. For sub-surface fishing, such as deep nymphs or emergers below a larger dry fly, fish fluorocarbon tippet. Fluorocarbon is thinner and stronger than mono-filament and less visible in water.

Fish more thoroughly. As trout become more concentrated due to low water, fish deeper runs with conviction as trout will hold in deeper, cooler water. Like above, slow down and spend time fishing all depths. Play around with micro split-shot and fluorocarbon. The sweet spot where trout feed and your fly drifts does exist...you just have to be patient and fish thoroughly to find it.

Think outside of the box. As a self-proclaimed dry fly snob, my late summer angling used to consist of fishing grasshopper and ant patterns on blind faith. I still do that and it often works well for me, but occasionally I have to get creative.



The dog days of summer are upon us. That doesn't mean your fishing has to cease, but it does mean that you need to adjust many facets of your angling. PHOTO BY JACK GARDER

I'll fish very long droppers off my dry fly when fishing a dry-dropper rig. A 4-to-6 foot dropper is not uncommon for me. Other longtime anglers I know will drag, rather than strip, streamers through deeper runs, thinking lethargic late summer fish are less likely to chase a stripped streamer. Consider taking colored markers to make the body of a tan fly black, so it looks more like an ant than a stonefly. The possibilities are endless—you just have to take the time to be different.

Maintain perspective. Trout are animals and react to their environment. Sometimes they feed and sometimes they don't. Sometimes, no matter how good an angler is or how perfect the rig and drift are, trout just don't eat. These instances occur more frequently in late summer than other times of the year. If you find yourself in this scenario, take a break and enjoy the surroundings. If you must have instant gratification, somewhere nearby there is a Taco Bell open 24 hours.

I used to disdain the next few weeks of the angling calendar. With more than 20 years of local angling experience, I've grown to really enjoy the last two weeks of August. The masses of tourists are gone and the fair weather anglers are back to reading online blogs. For those like myself willing to fish on a little less sleep and try something different, the dog days might as well be called the trout days.

Patrick Straub is a 20-year veteran guide and outfitter on Montana's waters and has fished the world over. He now writes and manages the social media for Yellow Dog Fishing Adventures. He is the author of six books, including "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fly Fishing" and has been writing The Eddy Line for seven years.

A version of this article previously appeared in a August 2017 edition of Explore Big Sky.





## Sun protection tips for young children

#### THE SKIN CANCER FOUNDATION

As we inch closer to September, many families may want to take advantage of the last full summer month by spending a lot of time outdoors. But whether you're barbecuing in the backyard or taking a vacation at the beach, it's important to remember sun protection for any little ones enjoying the summer sun with you.

Babies are especially vulnerable to sun damage due to their relative lack of melanin, the skin pigment that provides some sun protection, so protecting them from harmful ultraviolet radiation is imperative.

"All of the sun damage we receive as children adds up and greatly increases skin cancer risk later in life," said Dr. Deborah S. Sarnoff, president of The Skin Cancer Foundation. "That's why it's so important that parents make sun protection for infants and toddlers a priority and eventually teach children these habits that will benefit them for many years to come."

The Skin Cancer Foundation wants parents and caregivers to know that skin cancer is highly preventable. The following tips will help keep young children sun-safe for the rest of the summer and all year long.

**Seek shade.** Avoid direct sun exposure during peak sun hours, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and use an umbrella while on the beach. On walks, keep to the shady side of the street and use a sun shield on your stroller.

**Cover up.** Keep your baby covered up with a brimmed hat and lightweight clothing that fully covers the arms and legs. For added protection, look for special clothing marked with an ultraviolet protection factor of 30 or more.

Be careful in the car. While glass screens out most UVB rays, the main cause of sunburn, UVA rays can penetrate windows. Like UVB rays, UVA rays damage DNA and can lead to skin cancer. By law, front windshields are treated to filter out most UVA, but side and rear windows generally aren't. Consider buying a UV shield, which you can hang over any window that allows sunlight to reach the child's car seat. Another option is to install professional UV-blocking window film.

**Start sunscreen at six months.** Since infants' skin is so sensitive, it's best to keep them out of the sun completely. Beginning at six months of age, you can introduce sunscreen use. Choose a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Look at active ingredients; zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are good choices because these inorganic filters are less apt to cause a skin reaction. You may want to test sunscreen on the inside of your baby's wrist. If the child has a little irritation, try another sunscreen.

Use sunscreen as directed. Use sunscreen on all exposed areas not covered by clothing, such as the back of the hands, face, ears and neck. Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going out and reapply it every two hours and immediately after swimming or sweating.

Toddlers rarely stand still, so you may need to get creative with your sunscreen application routine. Sunscreen sticks work well for the face and hands, since the child is less likely to rub the product into their eyes. Sprays are another good option. Make sure to apply the sunscreen evenly and liberally all-over exposed skin, then rub it in. For the face, spray into your hands, then apply to your child's face.

For more information, visit skincancer.org.



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## Creating your energy in a troubled world



BY LINDA ARNOLD EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Now hear this. You—and you alone—are responsible for the way you feel. Even with everything going on in our world.

Random acts of violence, and the uncertainty they create, can knock you off your block. So, what can you do?

You may not think you're applying physics in your daily life. You absolutely are, though. I took Physics 125 in college—a

photography course. And that's the mirror image I want to demonstrate.

The way you focus your thoughts determines the way you feel, and that has everything to do with what's reflected back to you. It's like a magnet. And the more you connect strong emotion to those thoughts, the more powerful they'll be.

If you're focusing on all the negativity, your energy vibration will be low. And you'll likely end up feeling lousy.

When you're feeling "up" with joy and gratitude, your emotions are sending out high frequency vibrations that will connect with like frequencies and magnetize those in your direction. Put simply, "like attracts like."

Unfortunately, we live on a planet with a predominantly low frequency energy field, with eight billion people vibrating more feelings of fear and anger than joy. And we involuntarily take in those vibrations.

So, your biggest job in sustaining your energy is monitoring what you allow to flow into and out of your consciousness. I'm not talking about staying in a "Pollyanna" state of mind. There will always be ups and downs.

The trick is not to wallow too long. Figure out what you can control and what you can't control. You can't control other people. You can only control your reactions.

In the amazing book, "Excuse Me, Your Life is Waiting," there's a cute story about a Little

League player named Jessie. Although Jessie was very small, he stepped up to the plate with extreme confidence. The very first time he hit the ball, it went so far, they never found it. This happened over and over.

In an informal interview after one of the games, Jessie was asked, "How do you hit so many home runs?"

"I dunno," Jessie said innocently. "Every time I get up to bat, I just feel what it's gonna be like to connect. And I do."

Talk about controlling your energy! Jessie wasn't even aware of what he was doing. He just held the confident thought and linked it to the strong emotion of connecting.

Like Jessie, you're probably not aware you're creating energy frequencies. It can be difficult to sort through everything to know what you want, let alone figure out how to accomplish it. Here's an exercise that may help.

Step 1: Identify what you don't want.

Step 2: From that, identify what you do want.

Step 3: Get into the feeling place of what you want—like Jessie.

Step 4: Spend five minutes, twice a day, holding this vision.

Step 5: Pay attention to things that come across your radar.

While situations will not change overnight, you may be surprised how a focused effort like this has the power to transform your energy. Watch for signals, clues and "coincidences" that show up. Have fun with this.

And feel free to use this mantra: "Peace on Earth is a lofty goal, yet inner peace is within my control."

Linda Arnold, M.A., M.B.A., is a syndicated columnist, psychological counselor and founder of a multistate marketing company. Reader comments are welcome at linda@lindaarnold.org. For information on her books go to lindaarnold.org or amazon.com.





## SECTION 3: SPORTS, BUSINESS, DINING & FUN







## Community welcomes newest resident: Bode Miller

## The most decorated male American skier of all time makes Big Sky home

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – Bode Miller may just be the most recognizable ski racer in history. With six medals over five Olympic Games, among many other records, he's certainly the most decorated. Now, "The Bode Show" has come to Big Sky, Montana.

In a town where just about every activity is backdropped by the massive, standalone prowess of Lone Mountain, alpine sporting reigns supreme—what better place for a living legend of skiing to plant roots?

Along with his wife Morgan and their two sons, Miller began setting up a new home in Big Sky this summer, and says he's looking forward to reintegrating into a mountain community again.

Miller, 41, is a native of Franconia, New Hampshire, where he was raised in relatively harsh conditions by modern American standards, sharing a log cabin with his parents and three siblings, sans electricity or indoor plumbing.

Of course, being smack dab in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, log cabin or not, comes with a host of perks for any kid growing up, namely a reverence for the outdoors instilled at a young age.

"It was pretty tough and pretty rugged with long winters but lots of independence," Miller told EBS during a recent interview. "I had a lot of opportunity to play sports and enjoy my time."

Miller spent time in Montana when his sister attended Montana State University and the Treasure State is now providing many of the trappings of a life-loving, outdoors-driven lifestyle he grew up with back east.

"[Montanans are] really genuine and hardcore and tough, which I like," Miller said. "Talk about average lives being inspiring, and those are the lives you want to surround your kids with. I think that's a real part of Montana life. It reminds me of New Hampshire, just bigger and more extreme."

The title of Miller's autobiography, "Bode: Go Fast, Be Good, Have Fun," neatly captures the essence of his character. As a competitive ski racer, his relationship with medaling was complex, to say the least; for many racers, the medal is all that matters and gold is the goal from the start of every race.

Instead, Miller's approach was that of a creative athlete less concerned with the rigors and minutia of alpine racing and more so with the enjoyment skiing gave him. He raced "as fast as the natural universe will allow," Miller recounted in his book.

"I wasn't a spectacular competitor; I enjoyed athleticism and the freedom of the whole thing," he said. "While I was in competitions all the time, I had an uninhibited approach of going faster than was reasonable. I was playing rather than trying to win a particular race."



Bode Miler enjoys a hike with sons Nash and Easton at the Yellowstone Club Ski Area. PHOTO COURTESY OF TETON GRAVITY RESEARCH/LONE MOUNTAIN LAND COMPANY



Miller claiming the Super Combined gold at the 2010 Olympic Games. PHOTO BY CHRIS MACDONALD

Still, on paper, Miller was a mighty competitor—the best male skier the U.S. has ever produced, winning six Olympic medals over five Winter Olympics, one gold, three silver and two bronze; five World Championship medals over eight competitions spanning 1999-2015, pocketing 4 gold and 1 silver; 33 World Cup race victories, winning events in all five disciplines, making him the last the of five men, to date, to ever do so; the only skier ever with at least five World Cup victories in all five disciplines, among other accolades.

Since officially retiring from professional skiing in 2017, Miller and his family are making Big Sky home, dividing their time between houses in Southern California and New Hampshire.

"We were always planning to split time between oceans and mountains," he said. "It's really a natural split for me because I love both. The nature up in Montana, or even New Hampshire, rounds out what we're offering [our kids]."

While he lived in a winter wonderland much of his own, Miller is excited for the outdoor opportunities Big Sky will provide his children, particularly where the slopes are concerned, and the community values his entire family will be immersed in.

"I want my kids to be able to wake up in the morning and go straight onto the lift ... that was a struggle of mine growing up," Miller said. "We don't need amenities beyond what Big Sky offers: good food, good culture, good people and access to nature."

A portion of Miller's decision is centered on his new, long-term partnership with Lone Mountain Land Company, the prominent Big Sky developer that manages Moonlight, Spanish Peaks and various Town Center developments. Those involved call him "Chairman of the Boards" as a fun play on his title.

For Miller, who has fielded countless offers and requests to represent various brands and companies, LMLC's approach to their developments inspired his acceptance.

"I've had opportunities to do ambassadorships ... but it's not that common that I'm really impressed, with eyes-wide-open going into that sort of role," Miller said. "The way that Lone Mountain Land Company is doing their developments is amazing, like how they put 80 percent of the land in Moonlight into land trust. It's a pretty incredible thing. ... It's rare."

Keep an eye peeled for Big Sky's newest member of the community—but if you spot him on the slopes, don't be surprised if you only catch his backside.

Bode was introduced to the community on Thursday, Aug. 15, on the Music in the Mountains stage with an accompanying video by Teton Gravity Research, where he signed custom-made Big Truck Bode hats and raffled off a pair of Bomber skis and a day of skiing with him this upcoming season. All proceeds from the raffle will go to the Big Sky Arts Council and the Big Sky Ski Education Foundation.



## Lots of golf to be played

## MARK WEHRMAN EBS GOLF COLUMNIST

I know it seems like we haven't had much of a summer so far here in Big Sky, but there is still lots of golf to be played before you put away your clubs in exchange for skis. Below is a little bit of information about each of the upcoming tournaments we have here at Big Sky Golf Course that are open to the public.

The first tournament coming up is the inaugural Vine & Dine 9 Hole Hangover Brunch and BBQ, a scramble on Sunday, Aug. 18. With a 9 a.m. shotgun start, players will be paired with celebrities that are here to participate in our annual Vine & Dine event held at Big Sky Resort over the weekend. Cost is \$125/player and includes 9 hole golf scramble, cart, practice balls, brunch to follow golf and of course wine! We are very excited to be a part of the Vine & Dine schedule of events this year. Call Big Sky Resort for more information about the golf event or the Vine & Dine culinary weekend in general.

Next up on our calendar is the Big Sky Open being played the weekend of Aug. 24-25. This tournament serves as the club championship for Big Sky GC. The cost is \$50/player plus a \$54/day green fee if you are not

already a season pass holder or resort employee. The format is 18 holes of stroke play each day. The event will be flighted by player handicap with club champions being crowned in both the men's and women's divisions for both gross and net scores.

This tournament also acts as the qualifier for the Canyon Cup which is a "Ryder Cup" style event held in conjunction with Cottonwood Hills Golf Course in Bozeman. The Canyon Cup will be played over the weekend of Sept. 21-22. Call the pro shop at (406) 995-5780 to sign up.

On Sunday, Sept. 8,, the fifth annual West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation Golf Tournament will be played at Big Sky Resort GC. The tournament has a 10 a.m. shotgun start with a cost of \$100/player. All profits from this event benefit the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization WYSEF. Held annually on the same Sunday in September each year, the format is a four person scramble with lots of different hole events and player gifts available. Signup can be completed by calling the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation.

The annual Big Sky Chamber Fore-O-Six Golf Tournament is a fundraising golf scramble slated for Thursday, Sept. 12, with a noon shotgun start. All profits from this event will go to support the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce. Signup for this event can be done through our local Chamber of Commerce office. This event is one of the more popular tournaments of the year with a handsome



Even in mid-August, there is still plenty of time left to get more rounds of golf in before the Big Sky GC closes in late September. PHOTO BY DAVE PECUNIES

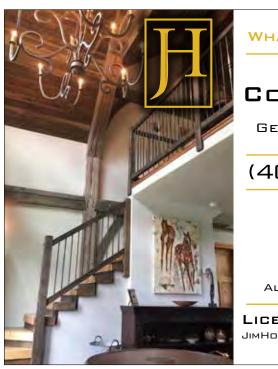
purse payout of \$1,000/team for both gross and net winners and a \$500 prize for the second place teams in each division. This event is open to non-members of the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce.

On Saturday, Sept. 21, we will be holding the annual IceHouse Open, a four person scramble with a noon shotgun start. The cost is \$100/player and all profits will go to benefit the Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association. There will be lots of hole events and the entry fee includes your 18 holes of golf, cart, practice balls and dinner to follow golf. Please call the pro shop to sign up.

Lastly, we have our Oktoberfest Ironman Open. This event is played on the Saturday of the last weekend the golf course is open for the season (Sept. 28). The format is a two person scramble played under the most difficult course setup possible. The cost is \$75/player and includes your 18 holes of golf, cart, practice balls, awards, hole event prizes and authentic Oktoberfest dinner to follow golf. Sign up through the pro shop.

With a variety of events left on the schedule—single-, two- and four-player tournaments with different formats that are open to the public—there are still plenty of opportunities to enjoy a round of golf before the summer slips away.

Mark Wehrman is the Head Golf Professional at the Big Sky Resort Golf Course and has been awarded the PGA Horton Smith Award recognizing PGA Professionals who are model educators of PGA Golf Professionals.



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## Big Sky Ski Education Foundation prepares for colder months

BY DOUG HARE EBS STAFF



Alex Raeger catches air in Argentina. PHOTO BY WALLACE CASPER

BIG SKY– Jeremy Ueland, program director for the Big Sky Ski Education Foundation for the past 12 years, has steadily grown the non-profit organization into one of premier ski programs in the country.

"Growth has been steady over the last four to five years," Ueland said. "If you go back ten years ago, we only had maybe 40 kids in the program. Now we have over 175 participants in all the programs—Nordic, Alpine and Freeride."

Alpine represents the largest program with 125 athletes, with the Nordic and Alpine disciplines drawing about 25 competitors each. While Ueland enjoys some downtime after the lifts stop spinning in

Big Sky, the warmer months still offer time for him to fundraise, plan and prepare for the upcoming season. There are also opportunities for BSSEF athletes to continue to hone their skills and train throughout the summer.

Once June rolls around, the BSSEF holds camps at Mt. Hood in Oregon—ground zero for summer skiing in the United States—which has the longest ski season in the country with lifts spinning into September. This summer's camp boasted 35 athletes and eight coaches for an 11-day trip that also provides participants après ski activities and days off to raft and recover from training.

Big Sky Resort recently broke ground on a building in the base area next to the Mountain Mall where the new BSSEF headquarters will occupy one third of the space, offering a convenient meeting and storage spot for the growing number of participants. Ueland noted that funding for their new headquarters was bolstered by fundraising efforts throughout the past few months.

Before the Fourth of July holiday, Ueland along with Freeride Director Wallace Casper and Head Youth Development Coach Aaron Haffey operated a fireworks stand adjacent to the Big Sky Conoco gas station that netted the program over \$12,000. Several BSSEF athletes tended the parking lots before the Professional Bull Riding events in the Town Center Arena which also helped raise funds for the upcoming season.

Many BSSEF athletes are spending mid-August in Chile and Argentina where they are gaining experience honing their snowsports skills south of the equator. Tomas Rivas, the Youth League Head Coach and a Santiago, Chile, native, is showing his native country's mountains off to 14 young ski racers, while Wallace Casper traveled to Argentina with four freeride athletes to train long before snow starts to fall again in Montana.

For those skiers that did not travel to South America, Ueland reports that the Dryland Series—bike rides, hikes along with individualized workout programs for athletes provided by Lone Peak Physical Therapy held most Wednesdays—has been a success.

"It's really great to get the team together off-snow throughout the summer. Everybody has different schedules and trips planned, but it's important to keep the kids in contact and active ahead of the upcoming season."



Big Sky Ski Education Foundation will find a home in a new headquarters at Big Sky Resort. PHOTO COURTESY OF JEREMY UELAND

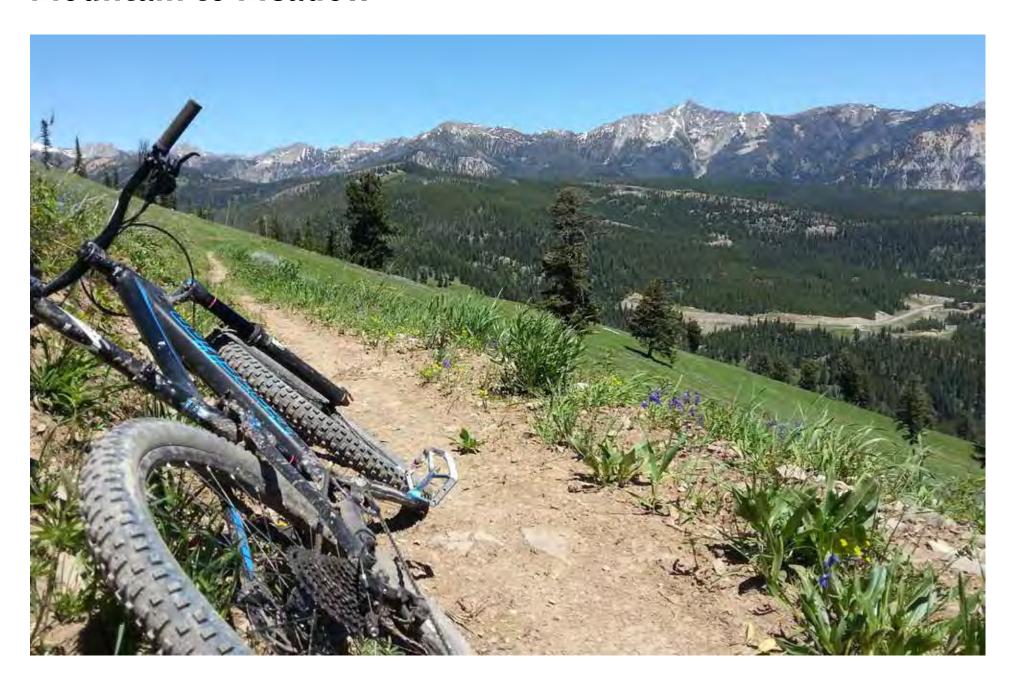


## **Big Sky Softball League Standings**

LPC Golden Goats 12~0
Cinema Bear 12~2
Hillbilly Huckers 11~2
Milkies Big Dog 11~2
WestFork Wildcats 10~4
Cab Lizards 8~6
Yeti Dogs 8~6
Dirty Biz 6~7
The Cave 5~7
Busch Light Boomers 6~8
Yellowstone Club 3~8
The Rubes 2~9
Big Sky Ballers 3~10
Choppers 1~11
Mooseketeers 0~11

The regular season championship game with take place on Wednesday, Aug. 21 at 6:15 p.m. PHOTO BY KENE SPERRY

## **Mountain to Meadow**



## BY CIARA WOLFE BSCO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hang on for the ride of your life on this 6-mile downhill mountain bike flow trail. The Mountain to Meadow trail is designed for fast, smooth corners as it weaves through forest, meadows and across familiar ski runs from Big Sky Resort all the way down to Town Center.

This increasingly popular mountain bike trail is one of the trails putting Big Sky on the map for a world-class mountain biking experience. The trail, rated an advanced difficulty level, is definitely not for a novice biker, but is designed to afford all-levels of mountain bikers the experience of a true downhill trail.

Starting at the Big Sky Resort base area, near Ramcharger, follow signs for the Upper South Fork biking trail. The Upper South Fork trail begins with a gradual climb on an old roadbed turning to single track for approximately 2 miles. During this portion of the ride be aware of downhill bikers coming off of the new Snake Charmer trail that Big Sky Resort put in last summer. This trail can be lift-accessed off of Ramcharger and extend the Mountain to Meadow experience by two additional downhill bike trail miles.

During the climb you will cross under the poma lift at Big Sky Resort and across the well-known ski run, War Dance. Once reaching the top of the 2-mile climb you will see a sign designating that you are leaving Big Sky Resort property and the downhill Mountain to Meadow Trail experience begins.

Hold on for the ride and enjoy the smooth, clean berms as you cruise back and forth through the forest for 4 miles, at the end of which you will reach a private dirt road. Following the signs, take a right on the dirt road until you reach paved Autumn Trail. Ride on Autumn Trail for one-third of a mile before turning right onto Andesite Road. Follow Andesite for approximately 1.5 miles until you reach Lone Mountain Trail (Highway 64).



Lone Mountain Trail will take you directly into Town Center, where you can catch the Skyline bus for a shuttle back up to your vehicle or another lap (summer schedule can be found at skylinebus.com) or stay in Town Center to grab a bite or hit one of your favorite watering holes for a post-bike ride brew.

Please respect signage throughout the trail and stay on designated trails. Your respect of private property will support the Big Sky Community Organization's efforts to secure trail easements on private land helping to connect this trail into our community trail system.

Trails Stats:

**Distance Round trip:** 6 miles one-way **Difficulty:** Difficult

**Elevation**: 7,538 feet at Base Area and 6,500 feet in Town Center Surface: Dirt

Uses: Mountain Bike

**Directions:** Turning off of Highway 191 onto Lone Mountain Trail, follow the signs 9 miles to Big Sky Resort. Turn left into the resort and follow the road up the hill staying left until you end at a free parking area located at the base of the Mountain Mall.

You can also park in Town Center off of Ousel Falls Road (3 miles west on Lone Mountain Trail from the Highway 191 intersection and traffic light) and catch a free shuttle on the Skyline bus. The bus stop is located in Fire Pit Park on the right-hand side after turning onto Ousel Falls Road off of Lone Mountain Trail. Bike shuttles fill up fast, so plan to be there plenty of time in advance.

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.

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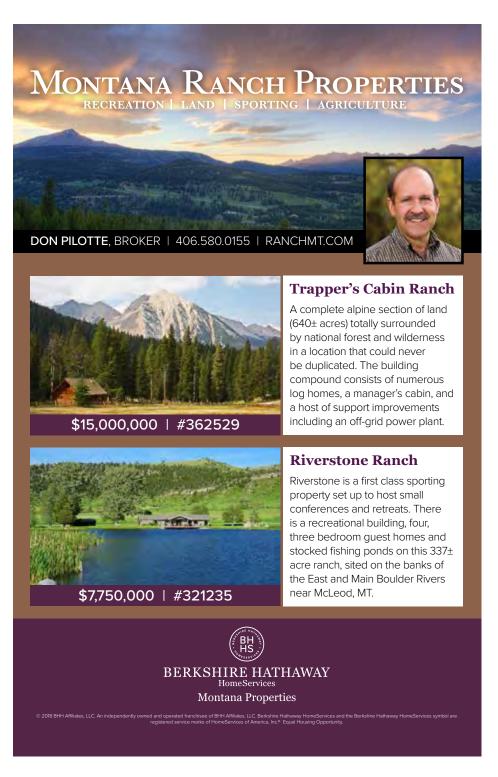
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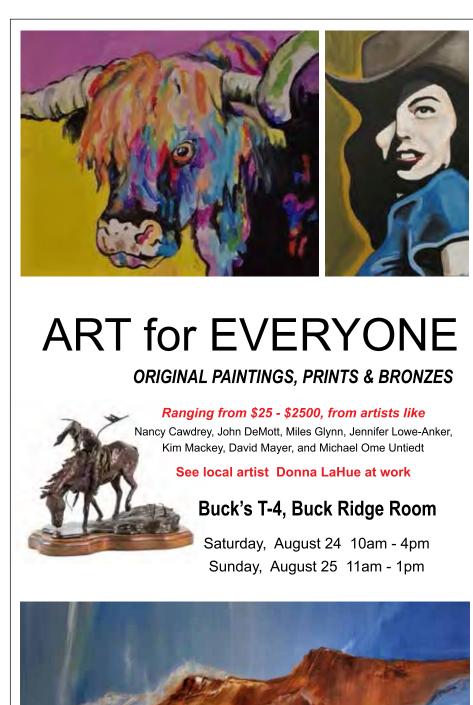
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### Gil Brandt Inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame



(From left to right) Pat Bowlen, Tony Gonzalez, Champ Bailey, Gil Brandt, Kevin Mawae, Ty Law and Ed Reed celebrate getting their gold jackets as members the Pro Football Hall of Fame's Class of 2019.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GIL BRANDT

### BY DOUG HARE EBS STAFF

BIG SKY– On Aug. 3 along with eight other enshrinees, Gil Brandt was inducted into the 2019 Pro Football Hall of Fame class, receiving a gold jacket and unveiling his bust to rest alongside the other greats of the gridiron sport.

"My life has been an incredible journey, all inspired by football," Brandt said during his acceptance speech in Canton, Ohio. "I've been fortunate to see the growth of this game the past 60 years."

Brandt was not exactly a passive observer to the evolution of football. As the Dallas Cowboys' vice president for player personnel from the inception of the franchise in 1960 through Jerry Jones' purchase of the team in 1989, Brandt, by all accounts, revolutionized the art and science of scouting. Brandt is credited with developing the evaluation metrics that NFL teams use today, developing the use of psychology tests, and inventing the numerical expressions and formulas used by computers to assess athletic talent.

For 29 years, he excelled as the Cowboys' personnel guru, working with other Hall-of-Famers coach Tom Landry and general manager Tex Schramm as the organization grew from a winless expansion franchise in its first year into "America's Team," winning two Super Bowls along the way. According to Forbes, the Dallas Cowboys are currently the most valuable sports franchise in the world.

Although when he bought the Dallas Cowboys in 1989, Jerry Jones fired Brandt along with Landry and Schramm, Jones was the presenter for the ceremony and Brandt wryly thanked Jones for making him a "free agent" three decades ago.

Since his tenure with the Cowboys, Brandt has remained active in the sport, garnering a reputation as a premier draft expert and revered analyst often appearing as a commentator on SiriusXM NFL Radio and other football-related media outlets in between visiting training camps.

The 86-year-old Brandt shows no signs of slowing down or retiring. "I don't know what I'd do with myself with football in my life," Brandt said over the phone. "I do know I look forward to getting back to Big Sky. It's my favorite place in the world and I've been everywhere."

Brandt, who first bought property in Big Sky in 1971, was flanked at his induction ceremony by three Big Sky locals: Brian Wheeler, Jamie Roberts and Al Malinowski.

"He was such a pioneer to the game, and he's been an inspiration to me for achieving excellence and remaining humble for a longtime now," Wheeler said. "It was amazing to see Gil not be able to walk twenty feet in Canton without someone stopping him to shake his hand and thank him for helping them somewhere along the way."

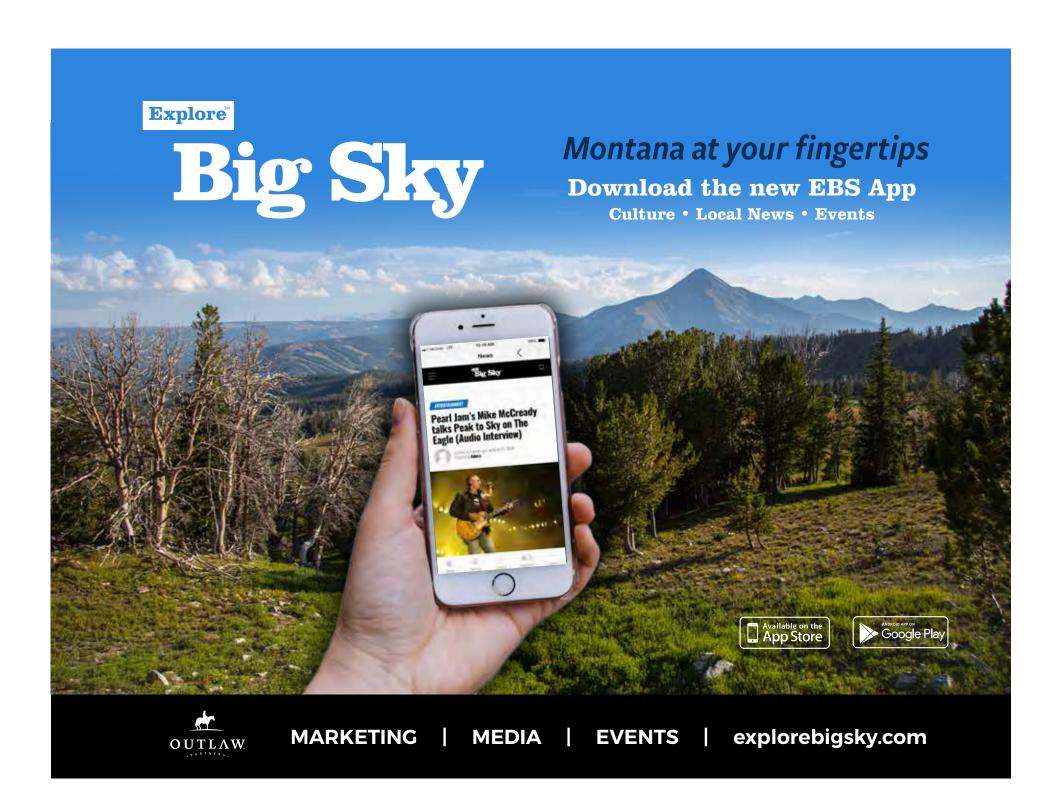


Cowboys owner Jerry Jones (right) unveils a bust of Gil Brandt at his induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. PHOTO COURTESY OF GIL BRANDT

"They call Gil the 'Godfather' on Sirius Radio, but he has also been the godfather to our local Big Brothers, Big Sisters Celebrity Golf Tournament," said Malinowski, a long-time friend of Brandt's. "He has been instrumental in getting it off the ground, reaching out to celebrities he knew to donate their time, and continued to generously support the event with his time and donations of sports memorabilia for the auction each year."

Malinowski, former Lone Peak High School basketball coach, also recounted how Brandt would make an effort to visit a home basketball game every December.

"Soon after that, new water bottles or Gatorade towels would show up in the mail for our teams," Malinowski said. "One year, he sent 15 travel backpacks for the team. Another time, he noticed one of our players wearing the same shoes he wore to school on the court. A brand new pair of Addidas basketball shoes in his size arrived in time for the next game."





# NONSTOP HEALTHCARE







## Making it in Big Sky: Alpine Water

### BY DOUG HARE EBS STAFF

Pete Manka is a busy man. In addition to serving as the Principal Water Resource Engineer at Alpine Water, a company he brought to Big Sky in 2009, he is also on the board of directors for the Big Sky Water and Sewer District (BSWSD), the Westfork Meadows HOA and the Big Sky Futbol Club.

When he's not engineering water solutions for the local community, the former freeride coach stays involved with his big mountain skiing roots helping organize, judge, and emcee competitive events in the region for the International Free Skiers Association and Freeride World Qualifying circuit.

In the warmer months, he can be found refereeing matches for the Big Sky Futbol Club, mountain biking, or hitting line drives in the Big Sky Coed Softball League, all while raising his three daughters with his wife Ellie. The Oregon native can also be found playing music at Lone Mountain Ranch and yurt dinners, which he says helps balance the demands of his engineering work, volunteering activities and athletic pursuits.

Explore Big Sky: What's the most interesting or unique thing about the town of Big Sky?

**Pete Manka:** It's not a town. It's pretty much a bunch of HOAs and boards that keep the wheels from falling off up here. Big Sky is the type of place where if you'd like to see something happen, you can make it happen by getting involved and putting your energy behind something that you're passionate about.

A decade ago there were no opportunities for middle school and high

school soccer players to play locally. A group of families put a lot of time into coaching and organizing the teams and now there is a Big Sky Futbol Club with over 120 kids playing locally and two high school-aged teams. I've learned a lot about the potential of energy and effort from being a part of that process.

Ever wonder why people wander in groups down the middle of the streets around the Westfork and South Fork commercial/residential interface? It's because there are no sidewalks or crosswalks and you're less likely to get run over that way.

It all comes back to the fact that we're not a town and nobody is going to make anything happen unless we decide what needs to be done and figure out a way to do it ourselves. There hasn't been much progress on incorporation lately, so it seems like "not a town" is the way it's going to be for a while. That means that all of the associations, organizations and districts in Big Sky will need to work collectively to meet the growing infrastructure needs.

EBS: How did you decide to pursue your master's degree?

**P.M.:** Started as kid building dams on the creeks behind my house in torrential rain storms. Water is a magnet for me. "Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it." –Norman Maclean

**EBS:** What is unique about your industry/trade that people might not expect?

**P.M.:** Water is an important part of people's lives. When you help someone improve their water, you improve the quality of their life and you get to know them pretty well. I greatly value the friendships I have made with the people that I have worked with over the years.

EBS: What are the biggest problems facing water management in Big Sky today? How should we approach and try to solve them?

P.M.: The elephant in the room right now is the fact that we are running out of capacity to recycle our treated wastewater. Big Sky is truly unique and exceptional on a national level for the fact that we have never discharged our wastewater into an adjacent waterbody (river, lake, ocean). We completely recycle all of our treated wastewater by watering the local golf courses.

We have no disposal options in the winter so we nervously wait as the ponds rise and we approach overflowing before we can water the golf courses again in the spring. We were just a few feet from overflowing into the Gallatin River several years ago. Nobody around here wants to see that happen. The BSWSD is aggressively pursuing the design of a state-of-the-art treatment facility which would allow us to produce drinking quality water, opening up other avenues for recycling our water such as snow making and aquifer recharge.



Since earning his Bachelor of Science in biology from the University of Oregon and a Master of Science in water resources from Humboldt State, Pete Manka has been involved in water resource engineering and management for over 17 years. PHOTO COURTESY OF PETE MANKA

We are also continuing exploration to bolster water supplies as development booms and the need intensifies. It is amazing how much more water we use in the summer (8-10 times) irrigating landscapes and during the big holidays. Some of the usage levels are astounding, so we are looking at ways to tier the rate structure so that everyone pays their fair share. Ultimately, being conscious and responsible for your personal water use is something that we all need to consider.

EBS: What are currently the most controversial issues surrounding water management in Big Sky?

**P.M.:** There was a group of 40 resource managers, scientists, business owners and representatives of citizen groups that met monthly for two years. We crafted a Sustainable Watershed Stewardship Plan that incorporates the leading science and technology into generating recommendations for a responsible and sustainable path forward. We have the ability to create one of the most advanced water recycling systems in the nation and on the planet, but who is going to pay for it? Is protecting the unique quality of the Gallatin River and the associated tourism worth it?

Most people like the river as it is. Logically, the forthcoming development should shoulder a portion of the responsibility for implementing solutions. The current system, though taxed, is working for the current size of our community and could last decades with just minor upgrades if there was no additional growth. A strong potential for collaboration has emerged recently between the BSWSD Board and the Resort Tax Board as programs to support infrastructure development seem tailored for collaboration to address our current challenges.

EBS: What are the biggest misconceptions about water management that the general public has?

**P.M.:** That when you turn on a water tap or crack a store bought bottle, it's all good. Seemingly clean water can contain many tasteless and odorless contaminants that are not always well regulated. If you own a private well, you are entirely responsible for your water quality which is unusual for many people who are accustomed to municipal water. It's wise to be conscious of what's in the water you drink and where it comes from.

Big Sky tap water is better than 95 percent of the bottled water out there. There is a perfect balance of minerals, no added chemicals and it was voted the Best Tap Water in America by the American Water Works Association. Just turn on a tap in the meadow or mountain, no disposable bottles needed in our valley.

EBS: What is it about Big Sky that compels you to stay here rather than another ski town?

**P.M.:** The community and seeing the peak every day.

EBS: What is one of the most memorable moments you have had as a resident in Big Sky?

**P.M.:** This is a very fun and colorful town. The memories are like a robe woven together by joy, sweat and pursuit of the dream. Many locals are actually living the dream every day in Big Sky and that is a big part of what makes this such an inspiring place. I can think of some epic stories, but one sentence just can't do them justice.

EBS: What's the best piece of advice you've received about your chosen profession?

**P.M.:** Learn or create something every day. The world in which we live requires that we progress and innovate in order to survive.

EBS: Can you say more about your recent collaboration with The Wilson Hotel? P.M.: Yes, it's a big win for water resources in Big Sky. Conserving millions gallons of water and hundreds of thousands of pounds of salt from ending up in the wastewater ponds every couple of years is a big deal considering how close our system is to maxing out. Science and technology are powerful tools and it seems wise to implement innovative ways to improve the quality of water while also conserving finite resources. Hats off to Lone Mountain Land Company for bringing a very conscientious and efficient Wilson Hotel project to Big Sky.

EBS: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

P.M.: If I could keep living everyday as I do now, I'd just keep doing that as long as I have that opportunity.

EBS: What changes to Big Sky's water management infrastructure do you predict in the next decade?

**P.M.:** The next decade in water could be pretty exciting around here. We have the opportunity to implement one of the most efficient water recycling systems on the planet, but ultimately that is governed by growth and demand. If this place keeps growing like it is, we have some complex questions to answer about the future of the community and the Gallatin River. My sense is that there is so much intelligence, resources, and forethought here, that our community could very well live up to the world-class potential that our mountain has always had.

EBS: What makes your business successful in the long run?

P.M.: I've had opportunities to grow and expand and I've always chosen to keep it small so that I can provide quality, personalized services to my clients. I don't want to lose touch with the knowledge and care that made this business successful in the first place. I strive to stay passionate about improving people's lives through bettering their water and continuing to innovate in order to make the best use of a precious resource.

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## Designing a cheese board

### BY CARIE BIRKMEIER EBS STAFF

Who doesn't love a great cheese board? They often become the centerpiece of gatherings, offering a little something to satisfy everyone's taste buds. With countless types of cheese and accompaniments, it can be daunting to choose the "correct" ingredients. Here are a few simple tips to follow when assembling a board for your next shindig.

#### The main event

When it comes to the cheese itself, variety is key. Consider factors such as the sharpness of the cheese, milk type, texture and its visual appearance when making your selections. If you keep the options diverse, you will end up with a cheese board that is both visually appealing and includes something that will please every guest's palette.

Incorporate some cheeses that are more approachable, such as a mild cheddar, and complement it with a more potent variety like blue cheese. Similarly, choose a firm cheese—Manchego and pecorino are great options—and one that is soft or spreadable, like brie or goat cheese.

The number of cheeses depends on the number of guests, as well as your preference. I typically choose at least three varieties. In terms of portions, a good rule of thumb is 3-4 ounces per person. Here are some of my favorite cheese combos for a small group of people:

- Jarlsberg, goat's milk brie or camembert, and sharp cheddar
- Chèvre, gorgonzola dolce, gouda and Manchego
- Triple cream brie, Mimolette or gruyere, and a mild blue

#### The accompaniments

Every cheese board needs a few elements to round out the cheese flavors. I like a variety of crunchy, acidic and sweet accompaniments. For the crunchy component, choose a few different kinds of crackers or crusty bread, and slices of apples or pears that can also act as a vehicle for the cheese.

Nuts and pickles, such as cornichon or gherkins, offer a welcome crunch, with pickles adding an acidic component, as do whole grain mustard or olives. Whole honeycomb makes for a beautifully presented sweet element, but a small ramekin of store bought honey can do the trick as well. Fresh fruit preserves or dried fruit make for a great accompaniment to sharp cheeses.

#### The filler and the tools

If you find empty space on your board bothersome, you can fill these gaps with grapes or greenery like fresh rosemary or, my favorite come summertime, edible flowers. Be sure to include plenty of utensils so that your guests can slice, share and shmear the night away. Don't forget serving utensils for accompaniments such as honey or mustard as well.



# Blue Buddha Sushi Lounge rolls into local food scene

Blue Buddha Sushi Lounge, Big Sky Town Center's newest restaurant, invited diners for a soft opening on Aug. 7, and hosted a full-swing open the following evening. Delicious and fresh rolls, made to order by Troy "Twist" Thompson, a sushi chef of nearly 15 years, and his capable team, wowed diners that relished in the artisan, Japanese-inspired food that is already a fixture for Big Sky consumers. Along with sushi, which translates to "vinegar rice," and sashimi, "raw fish," Blue Buddha patrons can also indulge in tasty appetizers, such as gyoza dumplings, and bespoke cocktails to wash it all down. According to Thompson, "Don't come here expecting fast food. ... That's not what we do. We're crafting an experience, from start to finish. Enjoy yourself."

### **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.

# You think you're pretty smart, don't you?



BY SCOTT MECHURA EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

We try and we try.

We learn butter will cause heart disease and high cholesterol, so we invent margarine. Only to learn decades later that it is far worse for us than good old-fashioned butter after all

All alcohol is bad for you, but it turns out, red wine has many antioxidants, as well as something called resveratrol, which is beneficial to our hearts.

And as late as the 1980s, pasta was considered a "health food."

My point being that it's hard enough to keep up with the lazy susan that is our FDA and big food—telling us what's good for us and what is now bad. But in addition, many manufacturers, and that's exactly what they are, use sometimes nefarious practices to mask ingredients, enhance the perceived quality, or alter the flavor of many of the foods we eat on a daily basis.

Here are some tips and things to look for when you shop.

Parmesan cheese. Next time you see "100 percent real" parmesan, don't be so sure. The FDA has been cracking down in recent years on fillers such as cellulose, inferior cheddar cheese, and even wood pulp. Hey, at least you're getting fiber.

I wrote a while back about saffron and what an amazing and mysterious spice it is. And expensive. With its high cost comes fraud. Saffron can be adulterated with turmeric, red pepper and even dyed onions.

Honey, pure honey. Nature's perfect food. Kept protected from the elements and oxygen, honey has been found sealed in clay pots that are over 5000 years old. Once unsealed, it was as pure and flowing as day one. But, never to leave well enough alone, honey has more impurities added to mention here, with China being the most egregious culprit.

Scallops are one of my favorite mollusks, not to mention seafood altogether. But scallops are not immune from corruption. Sometimes what you think are scallops can be anything from stingray wings to shark fins, usually Mako. Many "connoisseurs" believe they can instantly tell a scallop from a stingray fin. But I've also heard of chefs who could not tell the difference.

Rice. Thousands of species across the globe. Seems like it should be simple. But place your rice in a dry pan and apply some heat to it. Real rice will start to slowly toast and turn brown. If the grains turn black and don't smoke, then they are in fact not rice, but plastic. Yep, plastic.

And here are some quickies.

Some yams in the grocery store are died orange on the skins to extend visual life for the consumer.

Ice cream with additives will "melt," or dissolve, when drizzled with acid from something like lemon juice.

If milk contains a dilutant, such as rice water, most green plants stirred into it will turn it blue.

Well, they say turnabout is fair play. And so you don't feel completely deflated, here's a little tip I would like to pay forward.

The next time you are in need of maple syrup in a recipe, make a little simple syrup and add ground fenugreek to it.

Fenugreek is an annual plant from the Middle East, and, by hook and crook, has a flavor almost identical to maple.

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







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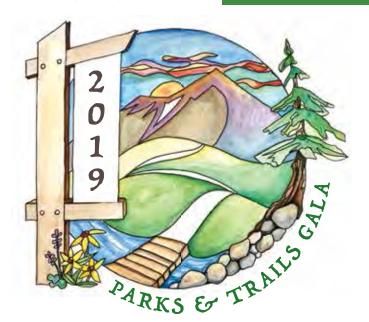
Two Moons Road, Lot 34 MLS # 330191 \$310,000

Corner lot in Big Sky's Meadow Village provides view protection of the surrounding mountains. Larger than most, this .35 acre lot has an easy to build, gently sloping home site with Eastern and Southern exposures. Located not far from the golf course as well as the Town Center. Fully serviced with power, telephone, high speed internet, community water and sewer available to the property line.

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#### **NOTICE**

## GALLATIN CANYON/ BIG SKY ZONING ADVISORY COMMITTEE VACANCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Gallatin Canyon/ Big Sky Planning and Zoning Commission is accepting applications to fill two vacancies on the Gallatin Canyon/ Big Sky Zoning Advisory Committee. This committee meets on the first Monday of every month (if there are items to be heard) in Big Sky, MT.

Applications may be picked up at the Gallatin County Planning Department, 311 West Main, Room 108, Bozeman, MT 59715 or can be found at www.gallatin. mt.gov/planning, under the Boards and Committees tab. Applications must be submitted to the Planning office by close of business on Wednesday, August 28, 2019.

For more information, please contact the Gallatin County Planning Department at 311 West Main, Room 108, Bozeman, MT 59715 or by telephone at 406-582-3130. The Gallatin Canyon/ Big Sky Planning and Zoning Commission may make the appointment at their regular meeting on September 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Courthouse Community Room, 311 West Main, Bozeman, MT 59715.

Don Seifert, Chairman

Planning and Zoning Commission

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### **American Life in Poetry:** Column 749

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE

There are so many delightful poems by Faith Shearin that it can be difficult to select just one to show you. This one is from her sixth book, Darwin's Daughter, published in 2017 by Stephen F. Austin State University Press. Faith Shearin lives in West Virginia.

#### Blue Elvis

By Faith Shearin

It was August 1977 when Elvis Presley fell face down on his Graceland bathroom floor; by the time paramedics arrived, he was

cold and blue. I knew this because I was with my grandmother, Belle, who called her sister, Geraldine, who came over at once so we

could watch the news. My grandmother knew

Elvis liked peanut butter on white bread with American cheese, eaten in his jungle

which had Tiki chairs, fur lampshades, a waterfall. Other neighbors arrived: women in short skirts, women who

brought with them more of the food Elvis loved: coconut cakes, fried chicken, bacon. Elvis was dead, and summer had been so

hot the things we touched burned our hands: handles of garden hoses, car doors, the metal swing set my grandfather

built for me on the back lawn. I listened to the sound of southern women's voices expressing disbelief; they said I swan

and I pictured something rippling and solitary; they said Well, shut my mouth and I saw blue Elvis, falling.

We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts. 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 ©2018 by Faith Shearin, "Blue Elvis," from Darwin's Daughter, (Stephen F. Austin State University Press, 2018). Poem reprinted by permission of Faith Shearin and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2019 by The PoetryFoundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006.

### **CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

- Same (pref.) Half-boot
- 8 Heddles of a
- 12 Love (Lat.) 13 Gelderland city
- 14 Quality (suf.) 15 Warm 16 Grandfather of
- 17 Nile island 18 Israelite tribe
- 20 Wallop 22 Camel hair 23 No (Scot.)
- 24 Vitamin B 28 Else 32 Tatar dynasty
- 33 Detective 35 Lion of God 36 Many times
- more than (pref.) 39 Arabic skullcap

- 48 Repeatedly hit 52 End 53 Sheep's cry 55 Wash 56 Rhine tributary
- 57 Amer. Ballet Theatre (abbr.) 58 Economy (abbr.) 59 Decay of
- overripe fruit 60 Slugger's stat 61 One of the Twelve Titans

#### **DOWN**

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- mountain Lady's title
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- current (abbr.) 11 Ham 19 Fetish
  - 30 Teacher of Samuel 31 Inlet 34 Indian baked

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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(abbr.) 29 Exclamation

Community

LAPELS

- wheat cake 37 Little tower 38 Participle
- ending 40 Self 41 Camel's hair fabric 43 Exclude
- 45 Edible shellfish 46 Cure 47 Berne's river
- 49 Speed-of-sound number 50 Bacchanalian
- cry 51 Conrad's "Victory" heroine

54 Warp yarn

Slang" author 42 Ger. conjuction 21 Chin. chairman 44 Oriental Extract of cork 24 Mountain potentate Rug recess 52 58 ©2019 Satori Publishing

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Development

### SECTION 4: ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT







## The Old Saloon presents uniquely old-timey musical experience

BY SAM ORAZEM

EMIGRANT- The Old Saloon was established in 1902 to service the thirsty travelers of a railroad line crossing Paradise Valley. The institution has survived fires, ownership changes and prohibition. It now stands as a relic of a simpler time that transports both patrons and newcomers back to the era of its inception through its architecture, décor and musical offerings.

The Old Saloon journey begins in an open field repurposed as a parking lot, where it immediately becomes clear that the party starts as soon as a car's ignition is killed—gaggles of buddies stand around their vehicles laughing, chatting and sipping cans of beer in preparation for a night of music.

A short bus ride to the venue facilitates intermingling between groups of strangers, and strips of LED rainbow party lights run the length of the retired public transit vehicles, setting a festive vibe. After unloading at the venue gates, the bus riders separate into two tribes: those looking to imbibe more dancing-juice at the saloon's watering hole, and those zealously shuffling in to catch the opening act.

The Old Saloon sports an exterior lined by weathered wooden boards and equally well-worn décor, featuring sentimental knickknacks, glasseyed animal busts and pictures of ladies' naked behinds on the walls. Unapologetically Montanan, one could say.

An old-fashioned upright piano with a pronounced, detuned twang, the likes of which Wild Bill Hickok would have cozied up to with his seventh whiskey, neat, demarcates the entrance to a small casino. A true Montana saloon always needs some gambling opportunities, afterall.

Outside, the stage faces a lot layered with a simple, wooden platform—the saloon's owner, Brett Evje, strives to create "a brand that mimics, or at least aspires to mimic, the great dance halls and venues in West Texas." It dutifully serves an extension of the original building, rather than a hastily tacked on addition, and the synthesis of the saloon and stage meld two distinct pieces of Western culture to manufacture a wholly unique atmosphere.

On Aug. 9, the iconic bluegrass band The SteelDrivers, who once counted phenom Chris Stapleton in their ranks, took the stage to the stomping of a raucous crowd, kicking boots and sandals against the wooden slats beneath their feet. And as the Grammy-winning band plunged into hit after hit, the urge to dance and sing along spread through the crowd like wildfire, with unabashedly off-tone crooning and often-sloppy moves there in abudance.



The ambiance fostered by the organizers and owners of The Old Saloon is that of an old western town—complete with a central watering hole. PHOTO COURTESY OF MELANIE NASHAN AND STACY TOWNSEND

In 2019, it's become commonplace for even the tallest gents in a crowd to crane their necks around a sea of iPhone screens. The good people at The Old Saloon, however, are there for the music and rubbing shoulders with friends, leaving phones holstered.

As Evje puts it, "For the most part, at our shows, people are singing, having fun, and dancing – doing the things you should be doing at a concert."

It's a simple yet charming quality that underscores the pure intentions of everyone involved; a testament to the quality of The Old Saloon's music and the character of those who shell out cash to see it.

At the close of the show, audience members, still buzzing from the world-class music, lined the chainlink for the bus ride back to the parking lot, already reminiscing in earnest amongst each other about the memories they had jointly formed. Everyone knew they had just experienced something special, but a question floated around the vehicle: Who's up next and when?

While Evje is tight-lipped regarding future concerts, he reiterates The Old Saloon's goal is "to have artists that capture people and hold their [the audience's] attention," the types he sees one day headlining the likes of legendary venues like Madison Square Garden in New York City. It's this commitment to quality that lend a vertiably timeless aura to each Old Saloon gathering.

The Old Saloon is a champion of the "come-as-you-are" and "get ready to move" Old West party atmosphere that teleports attendees to a different time and space. There is no shoving and no fighting, a "be good or be gone" vibe, perhaps the only difference between those cigarette smoke-filled times of old. Just 2,000 strangers, enjoying music together as if lifelong friends.

### 'Form and function' find a peculiar home in Bozeman's Misco Mill



The Misco Mill, originally built as a grain mill in the 1930s, was refurbished nearly 20 years ago. Today, it is a gallery, workshop, living space and VRBO apartment. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

#### BY BELLA BUTLER

BOZEMAN - A dated, yet charming, structure ornaments Bozeman's fledgling city skyline: an old grain mill. The relic, a standing homage to a Bozeman-of-old, has weathered the changing tides of the city, a fact most apparent when eyeballing it next to the neighbors du jour—a boutique coffee shop and a pottery studio. But the Misco Mill has adapted to the present, housing a gallery, a VRBO apartment and a furniture workshop, ensuring it will endure long into Bozeman's unfurling metamorphosis.

When one crosses the threshold of the mill's entrance, the noises of a busy Wallace Street fade and a warm light welcomes visitors into a high-ceilinged room. Paintings, photos and sculptures of both rustic and modern styles garnish the walls, achieving a palpable feng shui.

The gallery space, which serves as a first impression of the multi-purpose building, was a far cry from enchanting some 20 years ago when Shaw Thompson, his father Sam and his brother Nate stumbled upon the structure.

Thompson's love affair with the Treasure State began on a family trip he was 15 years old, igniting an adoration that is predated by other creative minds, such as writer John Steinbeck and painter Charlie Russell. In 2000, he answered the call, moving East from California with his brother in tow.

The Shaw boys passed by the old mill on a drive, observing the crippled structure through the tinted lens of what Thompson recalls as youthful passion, compelling the family to buy an empty grain mill that was nearly 70 years old and bore resemblance to a forsaken pigeon coop.

Serendipity, or something like it, lead the Thompsons to a place that needed them perhaps as much as they needed it, as the Shaw boys themselves needed a little glue and chewing gum to become closer.

Fortunately, Thompson was blessed with an artistic foresight that allowed him to see the potential in something many would discount as mundane—he refers to this as his "crazy mind." Despite the barren rooms and shattered windows of the mill, he recognized a space with the capacity to inspire him, one that could foster creativity in his art, his lifestyle and his craftsmanship.

Two decades later, the once-rundown mill is home to a vibrant gallery, workshop and living space, and Thompson's vision has only grown with it.

"This is part of a leg from a cast iron stove," said Thompson, gesturing toward the severe brow and snout of a mask, a member of a peculiar trio, hanging on the east wall of the gallery. The rust-spattered piece is laid over bison hide, which is adorned with two drawer-pulls to mimic hollow eyes. "It's become a disease ... I can't stop seeing these faces."

The masks are adjacent to a series of Thompson's acrylic paintings, featuring bright blues and reds, in stark, eye-catching contrast to the gentler earthy tones that dominate the gallery.

Perhaps, it's just this sort of juxtaposition that constitutes the spiritual backbone of the mill.

Having been a grain mill since its construction in the 1930s, the Thompson men were building upon what most would consider blank canvas. They felt, however, their mission was to supplement the mill's long-established wealth of character.

Through the formation of a gallery, a workshop and an apartment, the Thompsons built upon that charisma, bringing several fresh narratives to the mill.

"For me, the building created the adventure," Thompson said.

In Thompson's workshop, two-by-six planks are stacked atop one another like a Jenga tower—he laughs at the precarious inefficiency of

the method, but he can't help but feel allured by the abnormality, and even after two decades, the atypical walls, the paradoxically organized piles of clutter, and a cathedral-esque ceiling still inspire the artist on a daily basis. Much like a "Where's Waldo" or "In This Picture" book scene, knickknacks, doo-dads, rusty gears, ribbed ground stakes, tire rims and an assemblage of unidentifiable trinkets spring up in every nook, every crevice, for an optic experience unlike most. One's eyes could drift over the contents indefinitely.

Thompson, a collector of sorts, attends antique sales and trades with his neighbor for unique pieces. Strangers and friends even began leaving offerings on his doorstep, and the scraps he acquires become the components of lights, coffee tables and other home ornaments he constructs. A born artist, Thompson takes instruction from the form of the object, "listening" to the shape and its movement in a space to determine its final home. He must listen, of course, over a Johnny Cash tune blasting from a radio.

The Misco Mill artist takes pride in creating things of function and beauty that go on to become installations in people's homes.

"I think it's pretty cool to have something that is art but also functions well as something you can use every day," Thompson said.

Around the corner from the shop and up a set of polished stairs is Thompson's apartment, comprised by two sets of stairs and a ladder connecting two floors and a loft. His home is bathed in natural light, but is brightened even more so by the array of artwork that dangles on practically every inch of free space. Beside his dining room table rests an in-progress commissioned painting. Thompson said he likes to be surrounded by his work, as inspiration and decision making don't rest and often arises without notice.

Thompson is totally relaxed in the mill, a rare sight in an American culture of constant hustle, but he achieves this by existing entirely in his element. He is a man of few, yet thoughtful, words, but the eclectic and busy mill speaks volumes on his behalf. Despite the distinguished partitions of space, Misco Mill feels like a contiguous series of ecosystems, like when the pleasant blend of clinking metal and radio static bleed from the workshop and are picked up by the Mill's many guests and residents: Fanny, Thompson's pup, dragging her toys down from the apartment; Thompson's father perusing the shelves for a missing key; Thompson's girlfriend's mom greeting patrons as they enter the front door, to name a few.

"It's pretty hard to think of not having this place," Thompson said. "It would be a huge hole in my life. Once you get rid of something like this, you can't really replace it."

Eight decades: many more stories. This is the Misco Mill, and, for now, Shaw is its shepherd, breathing fresh life into a dormant, but never dead, entity.



The mill, during what is estimated to be the 1940s or 50s. Although it's current purpose is far from processing grain, some of the old characteristics still remain in the mill today. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GALLATIN HISTORY MUSEUM



Thompson's apartment sits above the workshop and gallery space in the mill. While most of the construction is new, he refurbished old grain bins to use in his closet and left an original beam in the main living area. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER



Thompson experiments with different pieces in the early stages of assembling a light fixture. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER



Light from a south-facing window illuminates a blank canvas in Thompson's art studio, which is lofted above his apartment. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

## **BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR**

FRIDAY, AUG. 16 - THURSDAY, AUG. 29

If your event falls between Aug. 30 and Sept. 12, please submit it by Sept. 4 by emailing media@outlaw.partners

#### FRIDAY, AUG. 16

Vine & Dine
"A Wine, spirit and food affair"
Big Sky Resort, 11 a.m.

Moonlight MusicFest Madison Village, Moonlight Basin, 2 p.m.

Live Music: The Dusty Pockets
Pine Creek Lodge, Livingston, 7 p.m.

#### **SATURDAY, AUG. 17**

Moonlight MusicFest Madison Village, Moonlight Basin, 10 a.m.

Vine & Dine
"A Wine, spirit and food affair"
Big Sky Resort, 10:30 a.m.

#### **SUNDAY, AUG. 18**

Vine & Dine
"A Wine, spirit and food affair"
Big Sky Resort, 9:30 a.m.

9 Hole Hangover Brunch and BBQBig Sky Resort Golf Course, 10 a.m.

Old Time Fiddle Jam Montana Old Time Fiddlers Association Bale of Hay Saloon, Virginia City, 2 p.m.

#### **MONDAY, AUG. 19**

Santosha Wellness Center Community Yoga and Lunch Proceeds to benefit the BSCO

Montana Shakespeare and the Parks "The Merry Wives of Windsor" Center Stage at Town Center Park, 5:30 p.m.

Big Sky Town Center Park, 12 p.m.

Live Music: Thunderpussy
The Eagles Club Ballroom, Bozeman, 8 p.m.

#### **TUESDAY, AUG. 20**

#HikeBigSky North Fork Trail with BSCO North Fork Trailhead, 10 a.m.

#### **WEDNESDAY, AUG. 21**

Big Sky Farmers' Market Big Sky Town Center, Fire Pit Park, 5 p.m. Live Music: Aaron Stephens Live From the Divide, Bozeman, 8 p.m.

#### **THURSDAY, AUG. 22**

Live Music: Honey
Island Swamp Band
Music in the
Mountains
Center Stage at Town
Center Park, 6 p.m.

#### FRIDAY, AUG. 23

Big Sky Biggie Mountain Bike Race Big Sky Town Center, 4 p.m.

Grains, Grog, Grub Historic Crail Ranch, 5:30 p.m.

Plein Air Painting Workshop Greg Scheibel Ophir Elementary School, 6 p.m.

#### **SATURDAY, AUG. 24**

Big Sky Biggie Mountain Bike Race Big Sky Town Center, 7:30 a.m.

Plein Air Painting Workshop Greg Scheibel Ophir Elementary School, 9 a.m.

#### **SUNDAY, AUG. 25**

Plein Air Painting Workshop Greg Scheibel Ophir Elementary School, 9 a.m.

Live Music: Dammit Lauren and The Well Bozeman Hot Springs, 7 p.m.

#### **MONDAY, AUG. 26**

Santosha Wellness Center Community Yoga and Lunch

Proceeds to benefit the BSCO Big Sky Town Center Park, 12 p.m.

### **WORTH THE DRIVE**



John Butler Trio released their newest album, "Home," in September of 2018. They will perform at KettleHouse Amphitheater in Bonner on Aug. 18. CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO

#### **John Butler Trio**

# KettleHouse Amphitheater Aug. 18, 8 p.m.

Overlooking the legendary Blackfoot River, at the edge of the Sapphire Mountains, the KettleHouse Amphitheater plays host to a rich musical experience via a synthesis of those breath-taking Montana views and quality live performances. On Aug. 18, the John Butler Trio will grace this premier Logjam Presents' venue for a night of roots music and rock and roll. Butler, once a busker on the streets of western Australia, is known best for combining various genres to create haunting medleys that continually surprise audiences. On one of his latest album, "Flesh & Bloode," Butler broke free from his infamously critical perspective of the status quo, and in a recent interview said, "I thought my anger was my strongest asset and that's what made me powerful, but it was actually my weakest link. My vulnerability, my honesty and patience and trust are my strongest attributes." Attendees should expect a more sensitive and authentic Butler as a reflection of what he exuded through his latest recording.

#### **TUESDAY, AUG. 27**

#HikeBigSky Beehive Basin with BSCO Upper Beehive Basin Trailhead, 10 a.m.

#### **WEDNESDAY, AUG. 28**

Big Sky Farmers' Market
Big Sky Town Center, Fire Pit Park, 5 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, AUG. 29

Annual Upper Gallatin River Clean Up Big Sky Community Park River Pavilion, 2 p.m.

Live Music: Ron Artis II and the Truth Music in the Mountains Center Stage at Town Center Park, 6 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous can help if you think you might have a drinking problem.

Call (888) 607-2000 to talk to a member of A.A., or go to aa-montana.org for meeting times and locations.





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## 'Midsommar' to be featured at 4th Annual Lone Peak Horrorfest

BY ANNA HUSTED EBS FILM CRITIC

This Halloween marks the fourth annual Lone Peak Horrorfest at Lone Peak Cinema and the third annual Haunted Peaks Halloween Festival in Big Sky. I can't think of a better film to tease the Halloween weekend than Ari Aster's "Midsommar."

"Midsommar" is centered on Dani (played by precocious Florence Pugh), a grieving graduate student who recently lost her entire family in a murder-suicide. To distract her from her pain, Dani's boyfriend Christian (Jack Reynor), an anthropology student, and his boneheaded friends (William Jackson Harper and Will Poulter) decide to visit to a commune in Sweden for a once-every-90-years festival that their friend Pelle (Vilhelm Blomgren) has invited them to. Dani was not invited, but Christian, ever the dutiful boyfriend, brings her anyway.

Before entering the gates of the commune, the group eats psilocybin (magic) mushrooms with some of Pelle's brothers. The ensuing psychedelic and drug-consumption imagery are among the greatest depiction of the effects of hallucinogens ever put to film, next to those in "Apocalypse Now," in this critic's humble opinion. I have never seen such realistic use of computer-generated imagery (CGI) before. But through the eyes of Dani, the CGI paired with the edits, eerie bright lighting and tonal soundtrack, hits the audience with mounting waves stress and anxiety through her own palpable experience.

This sense of unease builds as the film progresses, perhaps more so when the anthropologists are virtually undisturbed when the first "incident" happens, writing it off as a cultural norm that no outsider should judge. Cue the stereotypical "DON'T OPEN THAT DOOR!" type of moment. However, Dani and two other foreign visitors do not regard the incident, which I'll leave for your viewing consumption, lightly and attempt to leave the commune. After all, Dani is still mourning the loss of her family and not ready for the frightening rituals the remote Swedish community find meaningful.

Christian and his friends continue to take for granted these overt warnings, reducing Dani's well-placed instincts to stereotypical, girlfriend-provoked annoyances—to their ultimate doom, of course.

And Aster's choice to have "Midsommar" take place entirely in daylight is commendable, and speaks to the unique and powerful horrors the film conjures.

"Midsommar's" weaknesses are its runtime—2 hours and 27 minutes—and its



Harry Potter and Voldemort pumpkins from last year's Haunted Peaks Pumpkin Stroll. PHOTO BY ANNA HUSTED



Florence Pugh plays grief-stricken Dani in Ari Aster's grotesquely haunting 'Midsommar.' PHOTO COURTESY OF A24 FILMS

redundancy. We see far too much ceremony preparation, with Swedes dressed in white, picking flowers and making pies. Cutting scenes for length would have packed a bigger punch when the horror ultimately arrived. Still, the truly grotesque imagery that populates several scenes are bone chilling—despite the bright sun beating down on the fair-haired participants of the rituals.

Needless to say, "Midsommar," which airs at Lone Peak Cinema Oct. 25-27, is not part of the family-friendly portion of Haunted Peaks, but Horrorfest always promises some fantastic films for the entire brood. This year's Horrorfest will (most likely) include the new Addams Family animated movie for kids, for which costumes are encouraged, and businesses around Town Center will host the Saturday mini-Monster Mash Trick or Treating event in conjunction with the Horrorfest.

Haunted Peaks also has a full weekend schedule of events including, but not limited to, a free block party with live music, a pumpkin stroll, Geocaching, Halloween happy hours, a costume contest and more.

While the Haunted Peaks Halloween Festival takes place a few months after mid-summer, the power of the sun bringing out the living and the dead featured in "Midsommar" will not soon be forgotten by this All Hallow's Eve.

Check bigskytowncenter.com/events/haunted\_peaks/ for a full schedule and more details.

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

# Arts Council to host Montana Shakespeare in the Parks

ARTS COUNCIL OF BIG SKY

BIG SKY – Montana Shakespeare in the Parks returns to Big Sky's Town Center Park at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 19, for a performance of "Merry Wives of Windsor."

Duels, deceit and attempted seduction alight in this comedy featuring the beloved Sir John Falstaff, which attendees will watch in glee as he tries to fool two clever women and, instead, has the tables turned on him. "Merry Wives of Windsor" will be directed by guest director Marti Lyons and will provide a night of pure merriment for the audience.



Montana Shakespeare in the Parks comes to Big Sky on Aug. 19, with a performance of "Merry Wives of Windsor," made possible through a collaboration between the Arts Council of Big Sky and the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board. PHOTO COURTESY OF ACBS

As one of the region's most anticipated summer events, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks brings professional productions, at no cost to the public, to communities throughout Montana, northern Wyoming, eastern Idaho, western North Dakota and eastern Washington. Remarkably self-reliant, the company features 10 professional actors, selected by national audition, who tour without any technical assistance in their pursuit to bring live theater to various communities, primarily those in rural areas. This summer, 66 percent of the communities reached by the troupe have populations of 5,000 or fewer.

Montana Shakespeare in the Parks' inaugural season took shape in 1973, and since that fateful opening performance has performed over 2,250 times for nearly 750,000 people, cementing itself as a mainstay of Montana culture. The company's contribution to the cultural fabric of Montana and its unique ability to serve the most remote rural areas of the region has been chronicled by Montana PBS, NBC Nightly News, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times along with many others.

In 1991, after nearly two decades, the company was fully recognized for their contributions and was named the recipient of the Montana Governor's Award for the Arts, the highest honor that can be bestowed on an arts organization in Montana.

All performances of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks are free and this performance is made possible through a collaboration between the Arts Council of Big Sky and the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board.

Audiences are encouraged to show up prior to the scheduled curtain time with chairs, blankets, a picnic supper and friends and family to enjoy the evening.

Visit www.bigskyarts.org for more information on this event and the Arts Council of Big Sky.



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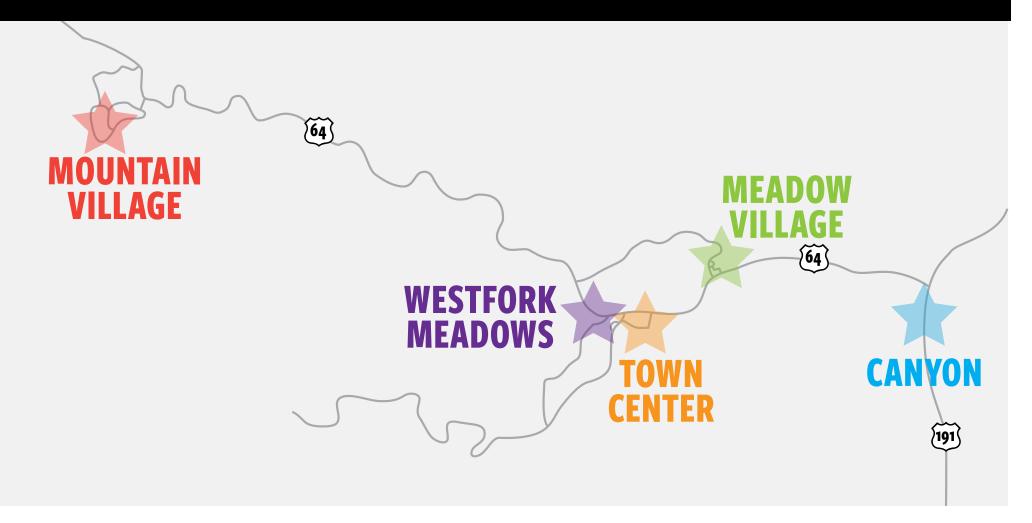
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# Tsering's Fund releases new documentary, 'Namaste Ramila' Film to showcase rippling impact of education on rural Nepalese girls

#### BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – Imagine, for a moment, the ground beneath your feet begins to quiver. You exchange nervous glances with your family, who, like you, work the terraced farmlands that canvas the foothills of the Nepalese Himalayas, just as your ancestors have for generations.

As the tremors intensify, fear freezes you in place. It's an earthquake, nothing new for people that live along one of the world's most actively changing mountainous land-scapes, but this one is different. The earth begins to crumble beneath your feet. Land-slides wipe out neighboring farms right before your eyes, swallowing friends, neighbors, relatives and croplands like some insatiable beast.

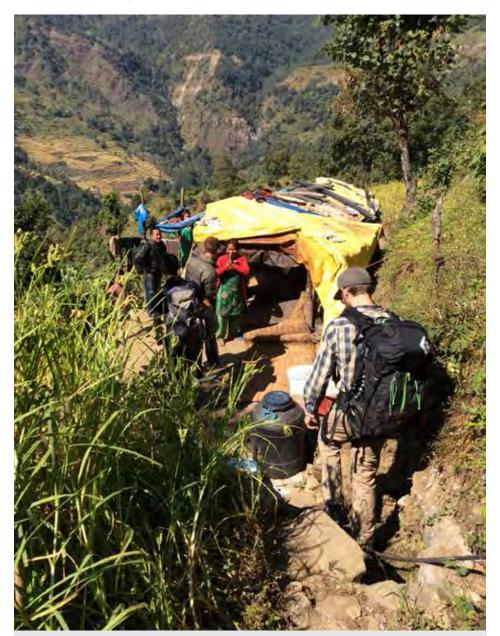
Suddenly, and without warning, you have nothing.

For many living in rural Nepal, this was the reality of April 25, 2015, when a 7.8 magnitude earthquake buckled the region, killing over 9,000 people and injuring some 22,000 more. In the cities like Kathmandu, people frantically, mostly in vain, picked apart piles of crumbled buildings for survivors. In the countryside, landslides and avalanches crushed loved ones, with similarly futile rescue efforts to follow.

It would prove to be the worst natural disaster the region faced in over eight decades, causing approximately \$10 billion in damage to the small Southeast Asian nation-roughly 50 percent of Nepal's annual GDP.

Worse still, Nepal was already gripped by a troubling phenomenon, the selling of girls and young women into indentured slavery and sex work, but the financial turmoil that followed the 2015 Nepal earthquake exacerbated the practice to offset individual losses.

This was especially true in the countryside, where a lack of physical and financial access to education perpetuates cycles of poverty and people have virtually no options outside of subsistence farming.



Filmmakers entering Ramila's home in a remote Nepalese village



Ramila, the film's protagonist, and her mother. PHOTOS COURTESY OF TSERING'S FUND

Tsering's Fund, while founded in the mid-90s, responded with swift boots-on-the-ground work following the 2015 earthquake. The organization's original mission was to provide children of both genders, along with their families, access to education, medical care and basic living assistance, but the tragedy really focused the mission on girls and young women, the most at-risk individuals in the region.

According to the organization's website, "[Tsering's Fund wants] to change the lives of Nepali children for the better. Although our mission is to support both boys and girls from the poorest backgrounds who have no parents or whose parents cannot afford school fees, it is clear that cultural and economic factors are more likely to prevent girls from accessing uninterrupted education throughout their childhood. The chronic underdevelopment of Nepal will not be resolved until girls in Nepal have the same opportunities as boys to pursue a quality education."

"Namaste Ramila," a 13-minute film that will premiere at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center in Big Sky on Aug. 21 at 7:00 p.m., highlights the experiences of six girls who were trafficked and the ways in which education saved their lives.

You see, traffickers and families exercise loopholes in Nepalese policy, which holds that a citizen can't leave for work in an outside nation until they reach 16 years of age. In rural communities, where birth records are all but nonexistent, parents and traffickers will tell officials their daughter or ward is of age, and the government officials are compelled to believe them with no evidence to suggest otherwise.

The girls are then shipped to far away cities, like Delhi, India, or those in several Arab nations, where they are subject to what is essentially slave work, or in other cases, confined solely to the role of a prostitute.

"The government officials have to take their word, but they know what's going on, and off [the girls] go to Delhi or to Middle East, often into the sex world or labor," said Pete Schmieding, a dentist in Big Sky and Tsering's Fund's chairman and president. "We spent a day with six girls that had been trafficked. The opening scene [of "Namaste Ramila"] is an interview with two of these girls about their experiences in Nepal. There's just no opportunity."

While it's easy to become incensed with the actions of these rural parents, often they too are duped by traffickers that promise education and employment in faraway cities, believing their child will send money home from honest work. Unfortunately, in many instances, they never see their child again.

Tsering's Fund's shifted mission seeks to upend the cycles of poverty and gross accounts of human suffering through education. By providing a solid education, one that is founded on speaking English and opening eyes to possibilities outside of those available in rural Nepal, Tsering's Fund volunteers find they are able to disrupt conventional beliefs, nefarious social practices and myopic perspectives on what can be achieved in an individual's lifetime—particularly a woman's.

For Schmieding and other volunteer workers of Tsering's Fund, the documentary is an opportunity to further raise awareness for the cause and inspire activism.

"Child trafficking is a huge issue, even in the United Sates, but most people never see the practice on a personal level. But where we were filming was 'ground zero,' this is where it happens in great numbers. It's the real thing," said Schmieding. "I want to raise awareness about the issue and show what happens when you decide to raise a girl through Tsering's Fund. You get to see what your getting involved means to this family, in human terms."

In Big Sky, Montana, far from the nation where an estimated 20,000, minimum, girls are trafficked annually, it's easy to feel detached from the problem. However, all it takes is \$600 a year to cover the annual costs of a top-notch boarding school, including room and board, for a child, effectively removing them from the circles where they are vulnerable to trafficking.



Ramila's village, complete with terraced agricultural developments.

Naturally, the lasting outcomes from such an experience are profound, and unlike many similar programs geared toward aiding children in need around the world, contributions aren't compiled into a single fund that is then divvied up amongst the organiza-



Ramila stands outside of her makeshift hut.

tion's total needs, rather specified donations are applied to a unique child. To cement the candor of the practice, the donor is encouraged to establish a connection with said child, whether that means choosing to correspond via a pen pal arrangement or even an in-person visit to Nepal.

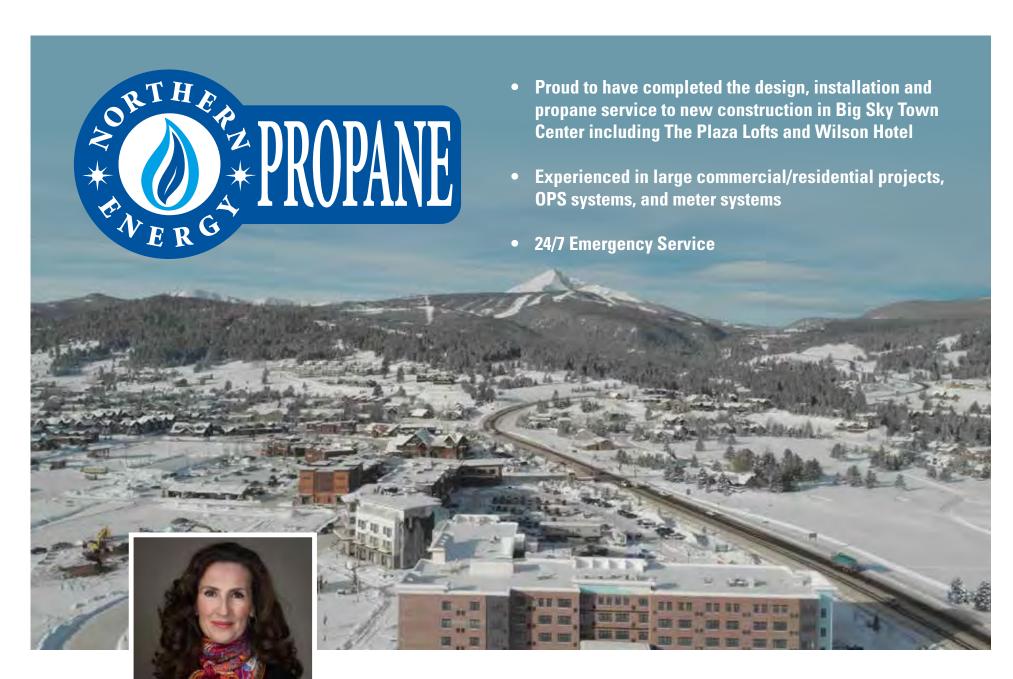
This directness is a hallmark of the organization, making realized progress for contributors and donors a very discernable reward.

"We just want to educate these girls so they can be independent and be leaders for their communities and families. There's a cycle of poverty that goes on in rural Nepal, there's truly no escape," said Schmieding. "They gain an awareness of the world that helps them seek other places, other pursuits, and therefore elevate their own communities."

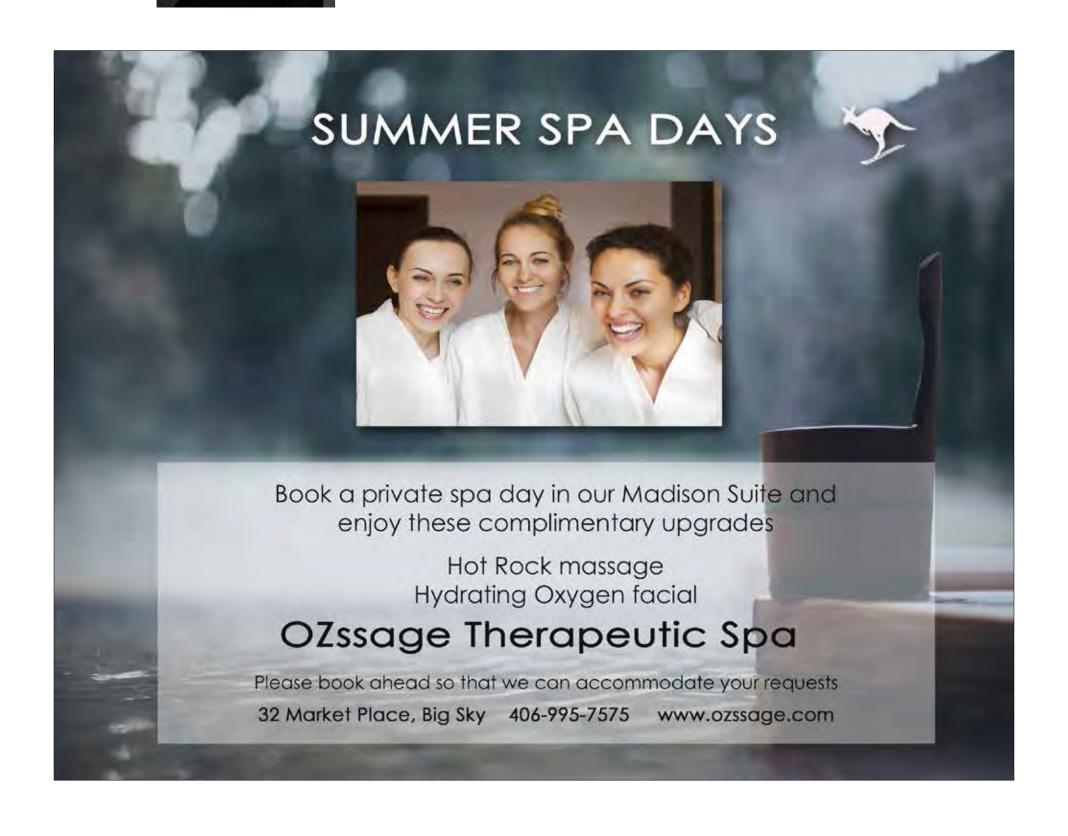
Members of the Big Sky community are encouraged to join the volunteers of Tsering's Fund, along with the filmmakers of "Namaste Ramila," for the free, eye-opening viewing of the film at the WMPAC, where there will be opportunity to interact with volunteers and organizers, for anyone seeking involvement in the cause.



Students of Jyugal Boarding High School, smiling for the camera.



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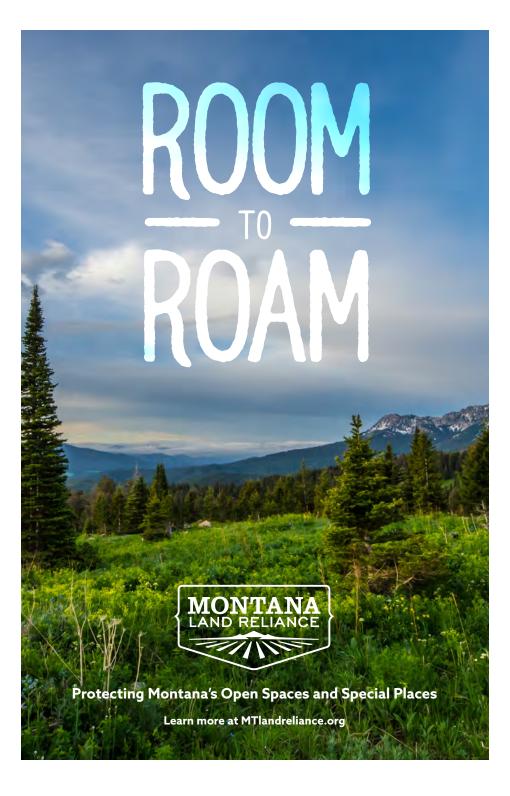


### The Madison's season of the float

Kayakers drift down the Madison River on a nice and relaxing "float." In the late summer, revelers across the state—young, old, friends and family—link inner tubes and other watercraft to, well, do just that—float down a river. According to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana's roughly 330 fishing access sites play host to 3.9 million annual visits, which can stress native fish populations and create steep maintenance fees for FWP. As with all wildlife and outdoor access offerings in Montana, there is a balance to strike between recreation and preserving the bounty of natural resources. Look to page 23 in the Outdoors section for information regarding the newly-minted Madison River Ambassador program, geared to reduce conflict at access points. OUTLAW PARTNERS PHOTO









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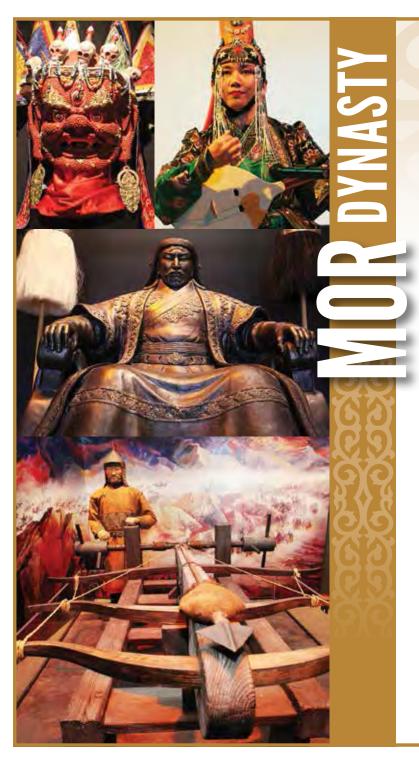


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