Community rallies for fire victims

Columbus Day: A controversy

Third annual Haunted Peaks Halloween Fest

‘HOWL!’ Wolves and community theater

Yellowstone’s first female chief ranger
A fall sunset back dropping Electric Peak in Yellowstone National Park. With two recent storms pounding the region with snow in early October, how much of the fall season actually remains? NPS PHOTO

Community rallies for fire victims
The Langs lost everything to a two-story house fire but the people of Big Sky have been quick to help them rebuild, crystallizing a sense of community.

Columbus Day: A controversy
Despite a bill’s failure to pass during the 2019 legislative session, some towns and cities across Montana have opted to call Columbus Day, a federally recognized holiday, Indigenous People’s Day.

Third annual Haunted Peaks Halloween Fest
Don your costumes, grab your candy bag and prepare for a weekend of tricks and treats.

‘HOWL!’ Wolves and community theater
Wolves, controversial in the region since their 1995 reintroduction, are in the spotlight for the upcoming Big Sky Community Theater production.

Yellowstone’s first female chief ranger
It took nearly 150 years: Yellowstone National Park recently announced its first-ever female chief ranger.

On the Cover:
Photographer Dave Reeves captured this self-portrait while bow-hunting up Moose Creek near the Asbestos Mine Trail. Archery season for deer and elk in Montana will end on Oct. 20. PHOTO BY DAVE REEVES

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

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39 Homestead Cabin Fork | Ski In/Out
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
3 BED + 4.5 BATH | 2,518 +/- SQ. FT | $2,195,000

Highlands Neighborhood | Ski In/Out
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
3-6 BED + 2.5-5.5 BATH | 2,310 - 4,520 +/- SQ. FT | $2,550,000 - $4,400,000

43 Mountain Valley Trail
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
5 BED + 5.5 BATH | 4,261 +/- SQ. FT | $5,175,000

45 Goshawk Trail
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
5 BED + 5.5 BATH | 3,247 +/- SQ. FT | $6,150,000

Gallatin Preserve
SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
160 +/- ACRES | $4,300,000 - $7500,000

Moose Ridge Condos
BIG SKY TOWN CENTER
5 BED + 5.5 BATH | 3,885 +/- SQ. FT | $1,400,000

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2 - 4 BED + 2 - 4 BATH | 1,818-2,645 +/- SQ. FT | $959,500 - $1,200,000
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SPANISH PEAKS MOUNTAIN CLUB
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BSRAD discusses revised ordinance, Community Visioning Strategy

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – On Oct. 9, the Big Sky Resort Area District tax board held an open board meeting that was largely administrative and set the foundation for significant next steps in advancing the revised resort tax ordinance and Community Visioning Strategy, among other agenda items.

The ordinance’s language was formed at a special Sept. 20 meeting, and is set to become effective on Nov. 25, with a second reading of the ordinance scheduled for Oct. 25.

“The tone is that the new ordinance will be administratively tight, but there will be no financial impact outside what it should have been already,” BSRAD Vice Chair Steve Johnson said at the meeting.

BSRAD Operations Manager Jenny Muscat announced that a draft of the Community Visioning Strategy has been sent to the board, with an advisory committee comprised of key players from various Big Sky organizations set to meet Oct. 15. By Oct. 29, the plan should be ready for advisory committee finalization and signoff, and will be presented at the Joint County Commissions Eggs and Issues meeting on Nov. 6.

Representatives from Big Sky Water and Sewer District also attended the meeting, unveiling a simplified version of their next steps to double the existing treatment plant, initiating the first public conversation with the BSRAD as it pertains to bonding for the project.

The next open board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 13.

Habitat for Humanity requests more volunteers for housing project

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – Habitat for Humanity, along with the Rotary Club of Big Sky, have requested more volunteer help with their project building affordable housing on Big Sky school district property before winter weather sets in for good.

Jill Elwood, volunteer coordinator for Habitat for Humanity of Gallatin Valley, noted that finishing the final wall on one of the triplexes would allow roof and interior work to proceed throughout the winter months.

“If the roof can go on before the snow flies, interior work can keep going all winter long at a more relaxed pace,” said Mel Crichton, a member of the Rotary Club who worked on the project extensively over the summer.

“No special skills are needed, but there will be work on step ladders with one or two people working below getting materials for the ladder workers. A crew of four or five can make a big dent in the work that needs to be done. If you can do only part of a day, that’s OK.”

Contact Jill Elwood at jellwood@habitatbozeman.org for more information.

‘Shoulder season’ and the Big Sky diner

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – Ah, “Shoulder Season”: a time for Big Sky and its residents to rest, indulge in a community devoid of tourists and powder hounds, and prepare for the season ahead.

“Shoulder Season” comes twice a year, defined by those slower weeks in between ski season and when summer throngs gather for the season’s countless world-class events.

But as much as it is a boon for the health of the locals, it can also spell trouble for a diner trying to catch a meal, when some restaurant owners shutter doors for a much-needed break.

So go forth into Big Sky during this fall’s shoulder season knowing what’s available before you find a sign on a front door that reads, “Gone hiking,” “Gone fishing,” or any variation of the sort. Dive well and drink hearty, Big Sky; if not for yourself then to “Shoulder Seasons’” past, present and future.

Visit explorthighb.com/shoulderseason2019 for a working list of restaurants’ hours. Did we miss something? Feel free to reach us at media@theoutlawpartners.com for updates, questions or concerns.

BSCO announces 2019/20 VIP Community Passport campaign

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – The Big Sky Community Organization announced the return of the VIP Passport campaign, a special fundraising effort for local parks, trails and recreation programming.

This year, BSCO is offering two grand prizes: the Community VIP Passport and a trip for two people to Turks & Caicos. Every $100 donated to this campaign earns one chance to win. Only 200 chances will be entered in the drawing and two winners will be chosen at random in early November.

The Community VIP Passport includes Big Sky Resort benefits like a Winter VIP Parking spot, golf, and a bike pass, certificates to local restaurants, yoga classes, theater tickets, ski tunes and more.

The Turks & Caicos Trip includes roundtrip air travel for two people on JetBlue and four nights for two people at the Seven Stars Resort & Spa on Grace Bay in Turks & Caicos.

Visit https://bscomt.org/donate/community-vip-pass/ for more information.

Third annual Haunted Peaks to bring tricks, treats to Big Sky

**EBS STAFF**

BIG SKY – As southwest Montana’s early snowfall suggests, we seem to have blown straight past fall and into winter. But don’t forget the creepiest holiday of all: Halloween.

This year, from Oct. 24-27, Big Sky will continue to revel with a budding tradition and community Halloween mainstay: the third annual Haunted Peaks Halloween Festival, hosted by Big Sky Town Center, Big Sky Real Estate Co. and Lone Peak Cinema.

“We have expanded the Halloween festival to four days and, working with our community partners, are adding some exciting new activities,” said Erik Morrisson, events and social media manager for Town Center, in an email to EBS.

The spooks begin on Thursday, Oct. 24 with a free-to-attend Haunted Peaks Block Party, including a live funk/soil rock performance by The Magic Beans to set the stage for a costume party on Town Center Avenue.

Friday will see the start of the weekend-long Haunted Peaks Window Display Competition, Lone Peak Cinema will serve as the moratorium for your sense of peace hosting a 12-hour marathon of horror films aptly dubbed the “Horror Feast Films” selection. Thirty-six hours of movie terror between Friday, Saturday and Sunday: can you stomach it?

If scary movies aren’t your thing, perhaps a kid-friendly treasure hunt will satisfy you? The Geocache Mystery is a weekend-long caper, spanning Friday to Sunday, complete with clues to solve mysteries—and with hidden prizes along the way.

Cap off the Friday night festivities with a costume party at Blue Buddha Sushi Lounge, where Big Sky residents can don their Halloween best and dance to a live DJ to win prizes.

Saturday, Oct. 26 will also be chock-full of ghodish delights: a “Haunted 5K Run to The Pub & Block Party,” presented by Moving Mountains Fitness and Beehive Basin Brewery; a haunted house, presented by Haas Builders and Big Sky Discovery Academy; and “Yappy Hour At The Rocks” along with a “Party at the Pumpkin Patch,” are sure to please.

And with that, a beloved, time-honored question: Trick or treat?

Visit bigskytowncenter.com for more information.
Community rallies behind victims of home fire

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – In the wee hours of Sunday, Sept. 29, tragedy struck the Long family when a house fire engulfed the young family’s home, forcing an evacuation and leaving Dustin and Karla, along with their two children, effectively homeless.

With the assistance of the Gallatin Gateway and Yellowstone Club fire departments, the Big Sky Fire Department team managed to extinguish the blaze within four hours of its reporting at roughly 12:30 a.m. But by that time the damage was already done; while uninjured, the four Longs and their dog lost almost everything to the two-story structure fire.

Yet a silver lining has appeared along the seams of this terrible blow to members of the community, revealing a deep network of compassion and support amongst residents.

Less than 48 hours since the fire was extinguished, neighbors of the Longs and various other Big Sky residents have rushed to their aid, providing housing, gathering supplies and clothes, and also spearheading crowd-sourced financial assistance in this extreme time of need.

The Longs were originally given a room in the Whitewater Inn along Highway 191, and have since been put up by Big Sky Resort in a Lakeside Condo while the family assesses their needs and begins to rebuild their life.

Launched the day of the fire, a GoFundMe campaign built by Michelle Frederick, a six-year employee of Big Sky Resort—where Dustin also works, has raised more than $20,200 as of publication, well in excess of the $10,000 goal originally set out by Frederick.

“We are overwhelmed by the amount of support and love from our family and friends. I struggle to find the words to express our gratitude,” Dustin wrote on an Oct. 1 Facebook post. “This community circled the wagons for sure. We are safe and sound. I will keep everyone updated on the progress.”

Neighbor Carrie Bryan, who stood by the Longs in those dark, cold hours, opened a bank account on behalf of the family at American Bank, giving those lacking tech savvy the opportunity to deposit money with the Longs later withdrawing the funds as they need them.

“It should make it really easy to immediately access the money that way, and they don’t need to necessarily go through GoFundMe,” Bryan said. “I suggested that the branch open an account, so people who can’t or don’t want to use a computer could also contribute.”

According to Big Sky Fire Department Fire Chief William Farhat, while there isn’t total certainty as to the cause of the blaze, there is evidence to suggest “smoking materials” may be to blame.

“The investigation is complete, and it’s going to be an undetermined cause,” Farhat said. “But it’s believed to have been started by discarded smoking materials that were stoked up by the day’s wind.”

He also noted that because the fire started outside of the building, the family was given ample notice from the smoke detectors as the fire breached the building’s walls, a potentially lucky break for the Longs considering the blaze outside reached two stories high.

“There was a significant amount of damage,” Farhat added.

The events are a stark reminder of the random and sudden disaster anyone can experience, but serve as an even better example of the resolve and strength of a small mountain community on the rise.
BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

BOZEMAN – On the second Monday of October, some Bozemanites will join hands for a celebratory round dance. Others, schoolchildren mostly, will sit at their desks and talk about the day’s historical significance. Federal employees will have the day off, while many other residents of Gallatin County will go through their day—life as usual.

Oct. 14 is a national holiday, known federally as Columbus Day. It’s a day to observe the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas on Oct. 12, 1492, which initiated European colonization throughout South and North America.

But many indigenous tribes decry the celebration of what led to mass removals and violence inflicted on their ancestors, with the aftershocks still felt, in many instances.

“We should not be celebrating Columbus Day at all,” said Francesca Pine Rodrigez, a Crow and Northern Cheyenne tribal member and board member of Indigenous Peoples’ Day Montana. “The reason why we are celebrating Columbus Day—we, as a country—is based on total fantasy.”

Pointing to a colorful map of historic tribal territories prior to Euro-American colonization, she said the West was not vacant land. “It was really a recipe for disaster when the settlers came because they were basically brought and sold on a lie,” she said.

Advocates for Indigenous Peoples’ Day Montana began campaigning three years ago to have Columbus Day replaced with Indigenous Peoples’ Day. So far, the effort—which launched in Bozeman—has been recognized at Montana State University and within the Bozeman Public Schools. Additionally, the city of Harlem located near the Fort Belknap Reservation recently voted to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day, joining the cities of Bozeman, Missoula and Helena.

In Big Sky, the school district still recognizes Oct. 14 as Columbus Day, though it isn’t considered a school holiday and students are required to attend class. For the most part, on Columbus Day specifically, it’s class as usual for Big Sky students.

“Like other major events in history, I take the time to bring it up in my class, kind of like 9-11,” said Tony Coppola, the district’s high school social studies teacher. “We talk about the two sides, the traditional western holiday—Columbus Day—and Indigenous Peoples’ Day.”

Coppola added that over the course of the school year, his 9th graders discuss Montana-specific tribal perspectives in their Montana history class.

According to Superintendent Dustin Shipman, the district doesn’t have a prescribed curriculum pertaining to Columbus Day. Students learn about Columbus in social studies classes within the context of the larger course curriculum rather than just talking about Columbus on Columbus Day. “We don’t only talk about Civil Rights on MLK Day,” he added. “For us it’s about helping the kids understand those conceptual things.”

Brian Squillace, the 6th and 7th grade history and math teacher, said his class will learn about Columbus and other explorers later in the school year when they discuss European exploration and the Columbian Exchange.

At Montana State University, classes are in session on Oct. 14, but the school is hosting a number of events throughout the month to celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

At noon on Monday, Oct. 14, the school will hold a traditional round dance celebrating all indigenous peoples. The Bobcat Singers will drum for the round dance, which has become an annual event. Prior to the dance, there will be a walk honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Following the dance, at 7:30 p.m., a free screening of the film “In the Spirit of Aratiikde: The true story of the National Bison Range” by local filmmaker Daniel Glick will be held in the Rialto Theater.

To conclude the celebrations, artist Ben Pease of the Northern Cheyenne and Crow tribes, a former MSU student, will speak at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Museum of the Rockies.

What’s in a name

The controversy of Columbus Day

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

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Gianforte reports raising another $500K in governor’s race

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

HELENA – Republican U.S. Rep. Greg Gianforte says he raised another $500,000 in his campaign for Montana governor, bringing his total to more than $1 million this year.

The amount reported by Gianforte on Oct. 7 is more than triple the $151,368 raised by Attorney General Tim Fox over the same three-month period that ended Sept. 30.

State Sen. Al Olszewski rounded out the Republican gubernatorial field with $36,880 raised in the third quarter.

On the Democratic side, Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney reported collecting $250,024 over his first fundraising period. Former legislator Reilly Neill raised $700, House Minority Casey Schreiner had not posted his fundraising results by Oct. 7 and newcomer Whitney Williams entered the race after the filing period.

In all, 18 candidates for statewide office reported raising more than $1.3 million for the quarter.

Montana temporarily bans vaping devices

**EBS STAFF**

HELENA — On the heels of the first vaping-related illness reported in the Treasure State, and a second confirmed in Gallatin County, Gov. Steve Bullock has temporarily banned the sales of vaping devices in Montana.

The Oct. 8 announcement declares all sales illegal effective Oct. 22 through Feb. 19 as state and U.S. health officials examine the causes and possible ensuing nationwide findings and legislation behind the 18 deaths and over 1,000 confirmed pulmonary illnesses as a result of vape use.

The 120-day ban is the maximum time frame allowed by law.

District Court upholds Montana net neutrality

**EBS STAFF**

HELENA – On Oct. 1, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a decision that requires state telecom contractors to adhere to net-neutrality. Effectively, this order prohibits Internet providers from blocking, slowing down or speeding up access to websites based on their ability to pay for such a boon.

“From the beginning we said that if the federal government won’t protect our access to a free and open internet, it would be up to the states,” said Gov. Steve Bullock in a statement praising the court’s decision.

“Montana was the first to act, setting off a nationwide movement of executive orders and state laws to protect the open internet,” he added. “The D.C. Circuit confirmed that states can protect their citizens when the federal government fails them.”

Grizzly moved likely daughter of famous bear No. 399

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

JACKSON, Wyo. – Wildlife officials in Wyoming have trapped and relocated a grizzly bear thought to be the offspring of a well-known grizzly.

Grizzly No. 399 gained fame for raising at least four litters of cubs within view of roads in Grand Teton National Park. People have established social media channels and even written a book about her.

Recently wildlife managers trapped a young female grizzly that was spending a lot of time near homes and may have eaten human food in an area south of Grand Teton.

The “Jackson Hole News & Guide” reports they moved the bear near Beartooth Pass near the Montana line east of Yellowstone National Park.

Dan Thompson with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department says the bear is likely a daughter of No. 399.

Flu shots urged in Western states with low vaccine rates

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

WYOMING – Health officials in Western states with low rates of flu vaccination urge people to get flu shots.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says Wyoming, Utah and Idaho rank among the bottom 10 states for adult flu vaccination.

The CDC advises that everyone over 6 months old get flu shots each fall. The vaccinations are updated annually to match strains likely to circulate in the U.S. before flu season ends in May.

Wyoming department spokeswoman Kim Deti says Wyoming has flu-related deaths last year and hundreds of hospitalizations every year.
Suspect arrested in Gallatin County hit-and-run death

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOZEMAN — A 76-year-old Gallatin County man was struck and killed by a car while walking along a rural road southeast of Manhattan and the driver of the car that hit him has been arrested.

The Montana Highway Patrol says the victim was hit at about 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 5 by a car driven by a 36-year-old man from Manhattan.

Court records say the driver and his passenger left the scene and called in a report of a carjacking after realizing they had hit the victim. Under questioning, the men acknowledged their involvement. The driver was arrested on suspicion of vehicular homicide while his 23-year-old passenger faces an obstruction charge.

The victim’s name has not been released.

Development underway in the high elevations of the Crazy Mountains

EBS STAFF

LIVINGSTON — In September construction began on the shores of Twin Lakes, located high in the Crazy Mountains northeast of Livingston. The development is occurring on private land that is surrounded by National Forest lands and it sparks the contentious issue of public access and motorized use.

Many wilderness advocates fear increased development will see to expanded motorized use on the island mountain range’s public lands.

Members of the Crow Tribe are among those concerned, as they have regarded the Crazy Mountains as a sacred place for hundreds of years, and they are asking the Forest Service to protect the area’s public lands from additional development.

Currently the Custer Gallatin National Forest is finalizing a draft of a document that would guide the management of the forest and Custer Gallatin spokeswoman Marna Daley told the “Billings Gazette” that the agency would consider these requests but even wilderness designation would not affect private property rights.

Montana among national leaders in outdoor economy

EBS STAFF

MONTANA — The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis released a report on Sept. 20 indicating that Montana ranks No. 2 in the nation for its outdoor recreation economy, coming in second only to Hawaii.

The outdoor recreation economy was measured at 5.4 percent of the overall gross domestic product in Hawaii, while in Montana it is at 5.1 percent.

Overall, the outdoor recreation economy accounts for $427.2 billion of the national GDP.


Partnership brings new backcountry skiing access in the Bridgers

EBS STAFF

BOZEMAN — With snow already falling by the feet throughout the early fall, skiers are already looking to the peaks in anticipation of the upcoming season. And this winter, backcountry skiers will have access to National Forest lands in the Bridger Mountains through a direct route around Bradley’s Meadow and Wolverine Bowl.

Made possible through a partnership between Crosscut Mountain Sports Center, Montana Backcountry Alliance and Winter Wildlands Alliance, the access will be available via an ungroomed trail through Crosscut Mountain Sports Center located about a mile north of Bridger Bowl Ski Area. Skiers can utilize the trail with the purchase of a pass from Crosscut.

FWP winds down season boat inspections, nonresidents now required to purchase AIS pass

EBS STAFF

BOZEMAN — At the end of September, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks released statistics from the 2019 boating season reporting on whether aquatic invasive species were discovered in locations throughout the state.

Overall, 110,000 boats were inspected at mandatory check stations throughout Montana. Many of these inspection stations closed at the end of September, but a few located in high-risk corridors will remain open through October.

Of those watercrafts inspected by FWP, which includes rafts, canoes, drift boats, kayaks and motorboats, 14 intercepted were transporting zebra or quagga mussels from out of state, while over 100 were carrying aquatic weeds.

All boaters in Montana are required to stop at watercraft inspection stations. Additionally, nonresidents planning to bring a watercraft into Montana are now required to purchase an annual Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Pass from FWP, which was initiated by the 2019 Montana Legislature.

“Protecting Montana’s waters relies on making sure we address the threat of boaters bringing zebra or quagga mussels, or other aquatic invasive species, into the state,” said Martha Williams, director of FWP, in a press release. “All the mussel-foiled boats that have been intercepted to date have come from out of state.”

The department reminds recreationalists that all watercraft and trailers should be clean, drained and dried before transport. Montana requires inspections for all watercraft coming into Montana from out of state, all watercraft traveling west across the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin and all watercraft launching anywhere within the Flathead Basin that were last launched on waters outside of the Flathead Basin.
Columbus Day is a federal holiday observed on Oct. 14. Some states have replaced the holiday name to Indigenous Peoples’ Day. What are we celebrating and why?

**Op-ed: A plea for our treasured waters**

**BY MICHAEL GARCIA**

I’ve been on rivers since I was 12 years old. I’ve been in the river business since I was 24. I paddle, row and dream rivers. What could be better for us than clean flowing rivers? How could we help our rivers?

One way for sure would be for me to see our rivers treated better. I paddle a few rivers every season that I still drink untreated water from, but only a select few. We need to act to keep these special waters and we can take steps to make it happen, but we can’t wait much longer.

Long enough have our rivers been the rugs we sweep our dirt under. Clean, pure water is essential in everyday life; everyone and every living thing needs it. Where our rivers are concerned, we need to do better.

We use our water resources for endless reasons. Some are good, some are bad. We all should see how protecting the remaining pristine waters we have are essential and totally in reach. Is there any reasonable argument against this goal? This is not a sacrifice. It’s a gift to ourselves and future generations.

I think of how lucky we are in Montana to have these incredible waterways. When it comes to recreational opportunities, Montana’s rivers offer an unparalleled spectrum of possibilities. From fishing to hunting to floating, Montana has all the choices you could ask for. Our free-flowing Yellowstone and its incredible tributaries are true jewels. The forks of the Boulder, Stillwater and Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone are as clear and pristine waters as you can find in America. East Rosebud Creek, our latest entry into the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, also feeds our country’s greatest free flowing river, the Yellowstone.

Never should we put the Yellowstone at risk and yet we are at odds with groups willing to do so every year. Rather, we should recognize all our special waterways and help establish standards that protect the remaining pure gems we have and create new means to upgrade our waterways in need of repair.

I travel extensively and recreate on rivers in several countries each year. Everywhere I go I’m engaged in river communities. What we have here and what we have accomplished on our rivers is a shining example that encourages other countries to follow. Still, what we have completed can’t stop. Our work is not done. We must accomplish more protection where undamaged waters run and more repentance where rivers need help.

In order to maintain, years from now, what we see today, proper effort and special legislation is required. We need the right attitude and the right laws in place to help make that happen. It is my hope that Montana’s U.S. Congressional delegation, Sens. Jon Tester and Steve Daines and Representative Greg Gianforte, will introduce and pass the Montana Headwaters Security Act to accomplish this worthy goal.

This draft legislation would use the national Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to protect some of Montana’s most iconic, free-flowing streams on public land. This includes rivers such as the Gallatin, Yellowstone, Boulder and Smith.

In the last 50 years we have protected some rivers and made amends for past mistakes on others where riparian systems were literally destroyed. It is my hope and the job of many hard-working people to see our rivers remain as pristine as possible. We have this responsibility, as we say to “leave things better than we found them.” Please ask our congressional delegation to protect Montana’s iconic rivers with the Montana Headwaters Security Act.

Visit [www.healthyriversmt.org](http://www.healthyriversmt.org) to learn more about the legislation.
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New hire brings 27 years of community experience to Outlaw

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – It was 27 years ago when Ennion Williams, an International Relations major at Roanoke College of Salem, Virginia, took a summer job at Lone Mountain Ranch.

Then a humble, low-on-the-totem-pole member of the world-renowned ranch's kitchen staff, it was in that first post that Williams seeded a connection to the remarkable community of Big Sky that has kept him here for nearly three decades.

Now, Williams will bring that history, vision and experience to the Outlaw Partners team in his new role as Vice President of Events.

To say he has inside knowledge on how the resort town ticks is an understatement; anyone who’s been here as long as he has or longer knows how much the town has evolved. But so too has Williams, eventually working his way up the LMR chain of command, guiding fishing trips for the ranch as soon as 1995 and ultimately becoming the general manager in 2006.

He then left LMR in 2010 to pursue an interest in guiding fly-fishing trips on the many blue-ribbon waters in close proximity to town, spearheading the guide offerings for Grizzly Outfitters. In 2012, he took on a job as GM of Big Sky Vacation Rentals, holding that position until 2017 when he decided to return to guiding and the culinary field.

Williams was head chef at the Spanish Peaks Mountain Club’s Sacajawea Camp Yurt for the winter of 2018-19 and decided to then bolster his summer workload by assisting Outlaw Partners in two of their most prominent July events—the Peak to Sky concert and Big Sky PBR. He will continue to cook haute cuisine at the yurt this winter.

“I’m excited to work full time with a world-class organization that has been a regional and industry leader in producing events,” Williams said. “This summer was great glimpse into that world, and I look forward to contributing further.”

Williams has also sat on many of the town’s boards over the years, serving as the current chair for the Big Sky Transportation District, a post he’s held since 2006, and on the boards of the Big Sky Convention and Visitors Bureau and Visit Big Sky from 2006 to 2019. He’s also sat on the board for the Gallatin River Task Force since 2018—a natural fit for the avid angler.

Williams hopes to bring his deep background in Big Sky—nonprofit, advisory and service industry—to the Outlaw Partners’ table and bolster an already strong events division team.

“I think that my experience in Big Sky managing and creating events, directing and sitting on boards will give me the acute ability to know how to grow events for Big Sky’s promising future.”

A tip of the cap to Big Sky’s newest Outlaw.

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The Legend of Bo
Featured Outlaw: Tim Pattison

BY JOSEPH T. O'CONNOR

Tim Pattison pulls out an old brown hiking boot, its upturned toe and worn, cracked leather befitting a yesteryear thrift store. He points a gnarled index finger at the heel.

“That’s where her front teeth went through,” Pattison says in his easy cadence, pawing the two punctures. “Those got a partial steel shank in ‘em. If I’d had tennis shoes on, she would have broke my foot and pulled me out of the tree.”

That was in 1979. A grizzly bear had chased a 24-year-old Pattison up a lodgepole pine and snagged his left boot. He kicked it in the snout, and it let go. But it’s a recurring pattern for Pattison. Bears have treed him seven times since.

“I can’t live in the city,” Pattison says. “If there ain’t a grizzly bear around, I don’t want to be there.”

Tim Pattison is a modern mountain man, an outlaw living in a world of technology—one he regularly avoids. He has a television, but prefers watching the wood burn in his stove: “caveman TV,” he calls it.

He lives in Big Sky, Montana with no cell phone, no email, no driver’s license. He and his tight-knit crew of hunters and shed-antler seekers are known as the “Bos.”

This is Bo Tim.

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Tim Pattison has a sturdy build and walnut eyes that gleam when he tells a joke, which he does often. He keeps gray-streaked hair in a ponytail that drapes like a mane from under his wool balaclava. He hasn’t shaved off his beard since 1977, when it was a shade darker than his eyes. His smile says he knows something you don’t.

“He’s a gentle giant, and my best friend,” says Terry Thomas, who along with his twin brother Lance, grew up with Pattison and eventually followed him to Montana.

Pattison was raised in Sacramento, California, the son of a rocket-engine inspector and a tough stay-at-home mother. When he was a junior at Rio Americano High School, his father took him deer hunting in Idaho for two weeks. On that trip, a 17-year-old Pattison killed the largest mule deer buck of his life with the .30-30 he got for his 12th birthday. Bo Tim was hooked on the mountains.

“I was looking for the wilderness experience,” says Pattison, who turns 60 in February. “I wanted to do what I wanted to do and not get caught up in the rat race.”

“Money is no big deal for me,” he says. “If I can wake up every morning and look out my back door and see elk up on the hill and the river flowing and the colors changing and I’m here and healthy, that’s all that matters.”

As the Outlaw Partners editorial department nears the release of the Winter 2020 edition of Mountain Outlaw magazine, we at EBS look to share some of the best stories from that cherished sister publication as it heads into a celebratory phase—10 years running, and still strong. Enjoy. –EBS Staff

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Tim Pattison for his 12th birthday. Bo Tim was hooked on the mountains.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1974, Pattison moved to Big Sky, Montana and into the Michener cabin with his black lab, Dudley. Built in 1913 near the intersection of Highway 191 and Loius Mountain Trail, the Michener cabin was a welcome sight for Pattison. He rented it for $33 a month.

“It was wise, women and song back then,” recalls Pattison, who once had 30 people in the 250-square-foot cabin. In 1997, Big Sky’s Ophir School administration refurbished the cabin and moved it south. It now rests in front of the school. “Bo Tim and Dudley” is carved into the center ridge beam.

Pattison needed a new place to live, and asked local contractor J.C. Knaub if he could put up a wall tent on his property, a veritable compound dubbed “Knaub’s Hole.”

“Tim showed up here and said, ‘I need a place to put my wall tent for a couple weeks,” said Knaub, sitting in his kitchen one afternoon last October. “He lived here for four years.”

In 1996, Pattison met Meredith Madden, Knaub’s nanny at the time. “She’s legend,” Pattison says. “She was the prettiest girl I’ve ever seen in my whole life.”

They had their first and only child in Knaub’s cabin next to the main house on February 7, 1997. It was -38 F the day their son Winter was born.

“Bo Tim is what he is,” said Scott Hammond, who’s known Pattison for 20 years and now rents him a cabin on the banks of the Gallatin River. “He doesn’t want to be bothered by modern day business. We could all aspire to be more like him.”

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No one quite knows what a “Bo” is, though some venture to explain the term. It’s a noun; it’s an adjective; it’s often verbed. There might be 10 Bo right now. There could be 20.

“If they liked you, they Boed you,” says Wade Stone, known in the Big Sky area as Woody the Wood Lord.

“They’re kind of a counterculture to the suit and tie,” Knaub says. “You hunted a lot, had your dog, lived in your wall tent, had friends that shared the same values.”

The Bos have lived by their own terms in Big Sky for decades. Some say you had to live in a wall tent for three Montana winters before you became a Bo (Pattison lived in a wall tent for five). Others that you needed to kill a bull elk every year (Pattison has killed one each year save two since 1974).

It may be just living off the land, or using the term "legend" to describe virtually anything.

“When I first met the Bos, everything was ‘legend,’” Knaub says, adding that Pattison created the moniker. "I went on a legend 10-mile hike, and I put a bull elk down with a legend shot in the heart. ‘I just had this legend burger.’"

Pattison and his crew hunted elk-shed antlers for 25 years, and have stories that stretch the confines of the imagination; tales of big money and high risk, of a man with three fingers and unflagging hearts the size of Volkswagen Beetles. They have satellite hunting camps up places like Tick Ridge and Never Heard ‘Em Scream Creek.

For 40 years, Bo Tim Pattison has lived like a mountain man in Big Sky, growing vegetables, hunting, fishing. He still seeks a bull elk every fall, but these days he also forages for character lodgepole pine logs to build his beds.

Six days a week, Pattison builds lodgepole beds by hand in the shed adjacent to his cabin. He’s a master at his trade. A single bed can take up to 115 hours to construct, and in mid-November, Bo Tim was on his 123rd. Through his business, Rustic Log Beds, Pattison can sell beds for as much as $3,500 apiece, but living the life he loves trumps all.

“Money is no big deal for me,” he says. “If I can wake up every morning and look out my back door and see elk up on the hill and the river flowing and the colors changing and I’m here and healthy, that’s all that matters.”

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I stepped out into the darkness of early morning. It could have been colder by my estimate. Long johns may have been a bad decision. The moon was light enough to see my way to the pickup and my trusty chocolate lab, Avery, was hot on my heels. I could sense her excitement. She knew where we were headed.

The grey-mouthed old dog jumped into the cab like a puppy and with a turn of the key we were headed off. Old fashioned country came through the radio and it reminded me of riding out on some of my first hunting trips with my grandpa. I sipped my burnt coffee and drove through lonely city streets that carried me to a deserted interstate, and eventually to an empty dirt road.

I had to be early. It was opening day and if I didn’t head out early the hunters who lived closer to the lake would beat me to the good spot. Not this year. The truck had been loaded days before, snacks were strategically placed, and the Mossberg shotgun was oiled and ready to roll.

But pulling off the main road, my headlights illuminated a camper parked in my best hunting spot. Grumbling I hopped out of the truck and threw on my waders and quickly smeared my face with black paint in hopes of hiding my face amongst the cattails. Avery didn’t seem as concerned about my savvy camping companions, more so impatient with my preparation. Like a camouflaged Santa, I tossed the decoy bag over my shoulder and began the descent to the water.

Altering my waders and quickly smeared my face with black paint in hopes of hiding my face amongst the cattails. Avery didn’t seem as concerned about my savvy camping companions, more so impatient with my preparation. Like a camouflaged Santa, I tossed the decoy bag over my shoulder and began the descent to the water.

As I reached the edge of the water, it seemed I had struck a bit of luck; I couldn’t see a single decoy in the river. Those guys must have passed on the good spot and gone straight for the lakeside.

Without too much thought I hastily started to set up. The muddy ground slurred and gurgled as I trudged through the sticky bog and out into the water. Decoys set, I waded back to shore.

The stage was set, now all there was to do was wait for the morning light. A star-speckled, deep navy sky lightened and turned alight with beautiful reds and oranges. Color danced off the waves almost like a strange flame.

Excitement and anticipation had been running through my veins all morning. Minutes seemed like hours as I constantly checked my watch for the legal time to shoot. I assumed the other group of people was right ahead of me but I couldn’t hear any noise or see headlamps. Not even their dog was making a sound. They must be good. I was making enough noise for everyone and looked like a fool carrying too much of a load.

As I reached the edge of the water, it seemed I had struck a bit of luck; I couldn’t see a single decoy in the river. Those guys must have passed on the good spot and gone straight for the lakeside.

Irritated, I abandoned my spot in the river and took a short jaunt over to the lakeside. I could hear the other hunters shooting but I couldn’t really see where they were. Then a lone mallard duck flew right over my decoys, soaring no more than 15 feet out to my left. Without thinking, my Mossberg was up where they were. Then a lone mallard duck flew right over my decoys, soaring no more than 15 feet out to my left. Without thinking, my Mossberg was up and tracking the bird in the air.

After a brief hesitation—I was thinking of that hawk—I fired and the victory sound of the duck smacked the water. Avery expertly dropped the bird at my feet, and we sat back down as still as a tornado of feathers to me. Off in the distance an army of webbed feet was spattering the surface of the water as they took to the sky. I did my best to make a case for them to come see me with my duck call, but it was no use. It seemed I was doomed to spend the morning with ducks of the plastic variety.

Still it was better than a day at the office. The morning brought more guns, sounds of boats far off on the lake, accompanied by the obvious sound of people laughing. My neighbors seemed pretty loud for duck hunting.

As I reached the edge of the water, it seemed I had struck a bit of luck; I couldn’t see a single decoy in the river. Those guys must have passed on the good spot and gone straight for the lakeside.

The silence of the day and the smell on the season was broken. I was sure that shot from my neighbors would kick off a chain reaction of birds and bring a tornado of feathers to me. Off in the distance an army of webbed feet was spattering the surface of the water as they took to the sky. I did my best to make a case for them to come see me with my duck call, but it was no use. It seemed I was doomed to spend the morning with ducks of the plastic variety.

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Avery expertly dropped the bird at my feet, and we sat back down as still as we could be, trying to control the excitement. Five minutes later another bird hit the water and my trusty sidekick retrieved it. Then nothing.

Sitting on the side of the lake and with coffee running dangerously low, my mind began to drift. There sure were a lot more power boats out this year. And there was even a paddleboard. If it was hot enough for them, no wonder the duck hunting was so bad.
Just then, movement among the green cattail caught my eye. I crouched low and tried to peer through the breaks in the leaves to see what it was. It was a hen merganser and not a few inches behind her were half a dozen little ones. I’d never seen birds so young on a duck hunt before. Maybe it was time to call it and wait for better, colder weather.

As I crested the hill on my way back to my pickup I spotted another truck that had crept its way into the parking lot. It was white, kind of dirty, with a distinct emblem placed dead center on the driver’s side door.

The game warden snapped his head my way, seeming surprised by my presence, and I nodded friendly in that Montana way people do. I tossed my decoy bag in the back of the pickup and as I looked over, I realized the campers I was hearing all morning were not hunting at all; the gunshots were from them shooting paper targets off the road.

I waved but they didn’t seem very friendly. The warden must have shut down their shooting.

When the warden made his way over, he was friendly. He introduced himself and we began chatting about the day. I told him I’d gotten a couple mallards and he asked to take a look at my tags, scratching Avery behind the ears as he did so.

Once dismissed, I finished loading. I was headed down the interstate when I caught sight of that white truck quickly approaching in my rear-view mirror. The warden flipped on his lights and I turned on my turn signal to move over to the side of the road.

He walked up to me puffing and puffing as if he had something caught in his throat and he squinted those eyes at me as if he was trying to read my expression. In an oddly embarrassed tone of voice he asked me a very simple question: “Do you know that duck season isn’t for another month?”

I didn’t answer immediately, puzzled by his words. I grabbed the regulations off my dash and started thumbing through the pages. By the time I found the season date page, there was no need. It started to sink in.

I had read the date for upland game bird season—read grouse and turkey—not migratory bird season—read ducks. I looked over at the warden with dumbfounded eyes.

“I had to get back into service to check myself because you just seemed so confident that you were all good,” he said.

Standing on the interstate with only my long johns on and camo paint all over my face, it felt like noon traffic just kept coming on by and staring me down. The warden confiscated my ducks and handed me a ticket.

So take it from me. Double check the regulations before you head out this season, and if you want to get the best spots, it’s best to start out early. But not too early.

Steve Drake is a Bozeman filmmaker and local outdoorsman.

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**Hunting and Fishing Season Dates**

- **Oct. 12** – General antelope opens through Nov. 10; Pheasant opens through Jan. 1
- **Oct. 17-18** – Two-Day Youth Deer Hunt
- **Oct. 20** – Archery-only season closes for deer and elk
- **Oct. 26** – General deer, elk and mountain lion (without dogs) opens through Dec. 1
- **Nov. 15** – Bison opens through Feb. 15
- **Nov. 30** – Many rivers and streams close for fishing. See regulations for details.
- **Dec. 1** – Winter mountain lion (with dogs) opens through April 14

**Ongoing:**

- Waterfowl, varied by district
- Through Dec. 1: bighorn sheep, black bear, moose, mountain goat
- Through Jan. 1: mountain grouse, partridge, sharp-tailed grouse, turkey
- Through March 15: wolf
**BEAR BASICS WITH BERNADETTE**

**DO YOUR PART, BE BEAR SMART**

The Sequence of Conflict

**BY KRIS INMAN**

**EBS CONTRIBUTOR**

To some, it seems surprising to see bears walking down the neighborhood streets of Big Sky. But, when you consider that Big Sky sits within our wildland ecosystem, surrounded by national forest and designated wilderness, it shouldn’t be a surprise. As rapid neighborhood development continues in places where bears live, bears will continue to move through.

Bears are naturally crepuscular, which means they are most active at dusk and dawn and remain active throughout the night. Often, a bear will discover trash in non-bear-resistant trash cans that are brought out the night before pickup, or very early in the morning. Bears then become accustomed to walking through neighborhoods to access a consistent food source.

“We get calls when people have to clean up trash strewn across their streets or driveways, or they see a bear in their trash. That is when they see bears as a problem,” said Kevin Frey, bear conflict specialist for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. “We set a trap to capture and relocate these bears to wilder areas, where hopefully, only natural food sources are available and the cycle of equating people with food can be broken and bears have a chance to be wild again.”

But bears have an amazing homing ability. In Revelstoke, British Columbia, biologists found that movedizzly bears covered an area eight times greater than wild bears, which resulted in about 22 percent of bears returning to their original capture site and getting stuck again at a second time because the attractant, trash, is still there. Some bears that have been captured and translocated more than 60 miles away from Big Sky have found their way back.

After enough food rewards from unsecured trash, bears become food-conditioned and see developed areas or homes as a food source and not a place to be fearful. Once this happens, conflict specialists call the bears “habituated bears” and they can become brazened obtaining unnatural foods.

These bold, habituated bears start moving through neighborhoods in the daytime and look beyond trash. An open window, garage door or an automatic door at a business or hotel beckons them in. They may find a bear-resistant trash can and attempt to break into it because they’ve learned its contents is food. This bold behavior also puts people at risk.

When a bear reaches this point, officials with MT FWP must make the difficult decision to euthanize the bear.

“‘The decision to lethally remove a bear is not an easy one,’” Frey said. “‘We make this decision when a bear poses a risk to human safety, or we have moved a bear multiple times and it is becoming clear that the bear cannot change its behavior.’”

The good news, however, is that the Big Sky community is changing its behavior: 70 percent of people use bear-resistant trash cans and negative interactions are no longer on the rise.

That said, unsecured garbage is still causing numerous conflicts. To date in 2019, there have been over 41 conflicts requiring management actions. Six bears have been captured, five more have been stuck in dumpsters not closed properly, and one bear had to be lethally removed.

To ensure that we see bears in their natural environment rather than roaming developed areas, make the switch to bear-resistant trash containers. It will take everyone using a bear-resistant trash can to break the cycle.

Remember to follow Bernadette Bear on social media @bearmartinglory 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.

**Electric fence one solution for bears**

**BY JESSIANNE CASTLE**

**BOZEMAN – When a black bear steals pizza from a plate at an outdoor restaurant, as occurred in Big Sky on Sept. 17, it may seem humorous at first. And it could sound funny to say the same bear tried to enter the Wilson Hotel through the automatic doors. Or maybe it’s living on the edge, an exciting phenomenon of living in bear country.**

But when a bear exhibits this kind of behavior—and shows no natural wariness of humans—Russ Talmo equates that pizza with a dead bear.

“It’s not necessarily a bear’s fault if the landscape is littered with these things,” he said. “But me leaving my dog food on the porch is going to kill a bear. You don’t necessarily make that connection until it happens.”

After repeatedly dogging human development over the course of a week in the Big Sky area, the pizza-stealing black bear was euthanized on Sept. 23 by wildlife officials with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. “We set a trap to capture and relocate these bears to wilder areas, where hopefully, only natural food sources are available and the cycle of equating people with food can be broken and bears have a chance to be wild again.”

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—**Talmo, the Rockies and Plains Program Associate for the national conservation organization Defenders of Wildlife, is the leader for the organization’s electric fence incentive program and recently completed a project in Cooke City with the very goal of preventing bears from getting too comfortable with people.**

In mid-September, Talmo spent an afternoon installing a small electric fence around the community compost pile, working in partnership with the Cooke City elementary and middle schools. He said he’s phazed with how it turned out, and based on statistics, he expects it will work.

His team conducted a survey of about half the 350 fence projects Defenders of Wildlife has installed since 2010, and of those, 95 percent are still in use. Ninety-eight percent of those in use have been effective and a bear conflict has not occurred, he said, and the 2 percent that did have a bear incident were either not turned on or not maintained.

Defenders of Wildlife offers a cost-share incentive program that will reimburse 50 percent of the cost of an electric fence up to $500 for securing any bear attractant. This includes garbage sites, fruit trees and gardens. Often times, Talmo said smaller projects fall into the $300 range, such as for a small beehive or orchard, and on a case-by-case basis they may seek additional funding support from partners like the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

Talmo works with property owners through every step of the process, from fence design and material selection to installation and maintenance.

“it is a time-tested tool that works very well and it’s not rocket science,” he said. “It’s pretty straightforward.”

Visit defenders.org/get-grizzlies for more information.
Ben Williamson brings a fresh youthful perspective to conservation in Greater Yellowstone and a commitment to make sure more diverse voices are reflected and heard in the ecological sciences and NGO arenas. PHOTO COURTESY OF BEN WILLIAMSON

BY TODD WILKINSON
EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

Ben Williamson has a resume of experience that, by itself, is impressive. This year the new arrival to Jackson Hole added another element. As a member of the millennial generation, he assumed the helm of the Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative and became one of the youngest people ever tapped to oversee a major regional conservation organization in Greater Yellowstone.

Before arriving, Williamson conducted research on rapidly disappearing whitebark pine trees in Yellowstone National Park, directed an environmental education center with The Glacier Institute, worked on reducing predator-livestock conflicts in northwest Montana, and facilitated a land use dialogue in the African nation of Ghana.

Originally from Colorado, he received an undergraduate degree from the University of Montana and then a master’s in environmental management at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. It was at the latter when he spent time with Susan Clark, who founded NRCC in Jackson in 1987. Since then, NRCC has functioned as a nexus for scientists working in myriad disciplines, all dedicated to addressing opportunities and challenges in large landscape conservation.

Not long ago, I had an interview with Williamson in which he shared his perspective about key conservation issues and how some members of his generation relate to the world.

Todd Wilkinson: What do you think separates the new emerging younger generations of thinkers from their predecessors?

Ben Williamson: Generation Z is growing up in a very different political moment than even me, a millennial. I was raised in the ’90s with a collective feeling that everything is OK, and the arc of evolution is moving onward and upward to [be] more inclusive …

For me, this sense eroded as I came of age in the early 2000s with our country’s endless engagement in war, the explosion of climate change rhetoric and the 2008 recession. Suddenly, my future didn’t seem as stable as the one America seemed to promise me. It became apparent that any sense of stability and safety is fragile and depends on where you live and who you are. I was also raised in tandem with the evolution of social media. My generation was introduced to this type of technology as teenagers, so it was a learned behavior.

The current generation—as every generation before it—are simply inheritors of the moment they occupy. Generation Z is unique in many ways. To me, the obvious ones are they haven’t lived in a time where an illusion of stability is felt and they’re the first generation to develop their sense of self completely in tandem with social media.

At my most optimistic, Generation Z is growing up in a truly networked society, where the lines of hierarchy and power are no longer covert. I like to think this is manifesting in a greater sense of empathy. Maybe we see this in the Sunrise Movement or the March for Our Lives movement. Still, I worry that chaos has become normative and I wonder what that does for one’s conception of democracy.

T.W.: There is fear that the kind of human development which overwhelmed nature along the Front Range of Colorado might be repeated here in the Greater Yellowstone. Can you comment on this?

B.W.: My childhood was an education in the ever-changing quality of landscapes. For example, within the span of one year, the irrigation ditch I caught crawdads in was dried, filled in and built over with houses. That rate of change fostered an inquisitive attitude: why so much change?

I then moved to Montana, thinking if I could be in surroundings I considered more remote, I’d find a more comfortable stability away from the rapid pace of growth. Instead, the story I told myself grew much more complex and the illusion of escaping quickly dissolved.

Fast forward and I’ve found myself at NRCC, with experience working in various environmental education and field biology positions in Montana and two years at Yale F&ES studying management and policy. With these interests, the central challenge of my position is, what to do with all of this?

T.W.: How can we create a better future together if there’s a divide between those who know what’s coming with climate change and others who deny reality?

B.W.: Climate science has shown by the end of the century, we’ll experience somewhere between a 2- and 4-degree Celsius increase in temperature. The exact effects of this are varied and speculative, but there is no doubt that this level of temperature increase will impose very different conditions than the ones we operate with today.

The problem is that climate science has told the problem of climate change in a way that is nearly unsolvable from a political perspective. To simplify it, we have science to show us what the problem is, and we have policy to decide how to solve the problem—we’ve done a good job with science but a poor job with policy. Susan Clark and other scientists at NRCC are calling for a shift. As professionals in this field, we need to up our game on learning to understand our story and use that understanding to move us in the direction we would all like to go.

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.
University students seek plastic-degrading microbes

BY JESSIANNE CASTLE

BOZEMAN – Adorned in rubber boots and equipped with a lengthy rod, a handful of Montana State University students forayed into Yellowstone National Park in early September.

Armed with probes, glass vials and notebooks, they were testing thermal waters in the remote Heart Lake Geyser Basin, which is home to more than 200 geothermal features.

The 11 students hiked 9 miles to their backcountry camp in two groups for two separate four-day trips, and were accompanied by Dana Skorupa, an assistant research professor in MSU’s Center for Biofilm Engineering, and Brent Payton, the director of the college’s interdisciplinary Thermal Biology Institute. Working in the second week of the school semester, they were tasked with collecting hot spring water samples that they would later culture in a lab in an effort to break down plastic.

The sampling trip was a component of a course in the Honors College, aptly named “Extreme Microbiology in Yellowstone,” where undergraduate students learn through hands-on experience how thermophiles can be used for biotechnology.

“It’s an opportunity to have [students] learn about and see and practice the actual process of science, from designing an experiment, carrying it out, interpreting the data, communicating their findings,” said Skorupa, who is the course instructor.

“From start to finish, they see the whole process, which is unique. Not only is the content something that hasn’t been offered at MSU, but it’s also a research-based course. There’s very few undergraduate courses that offer that at universities.”

The class is the first time the university has offered content on Yellowstone’s microbial thermophiles and was launched in 2016 as a part of a $1 million grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation. The grant provided funds for four years and is also funding research at the Thermal Biology Institute.

With the grant expiration this year, Skorupa said faculty are looking at ways to secure funds as they plan to continue offering the course permanently. She says it’s an important opportunity to connect undergraduate students with researchers and is a great way to get younger students excited about conducting their own research.

“Being able to contribute to research so early in their undergraduate career benefits students in that it provides a window into topics that are of interest to the greater scientific community,” she said. “Often times, even when undergraduate courses have this research component, it’s not steeped in actual science the professors are conducting in their labs.”

Over the past few years, the microbiology class has evolved from challenging students to grow a microbe from Yellowstone that’s never been cultured before, to this year’s task of finding a heat-stable microbe that degrades plastic, which could be used in the recycling process to break down single-use plastics. This specific research is an extension of Skorupa’s own work in the lab, where she’s beginning to see promising results.

“These undergrads could be the first ones to find biodegraders and enzymes from these thermophiles that might be really useful in helping recycling streams,” she said. “I like to tell them that if even one of our four groups is successful that’s a huge step forward in our field of finding applications for these thermophiles. They go into it knowing it’s a long shot. But that’s part of learning the scientific process—it’s not always successful.”

Emory Hoelscher-Hull, 18, is a first semester freshman majoring in conservation biology who is enrolled in Skorupa’s class. She hails from Seattle and says one of the reasons she came to MSU is because she wanted to do undergraduate research.

“A year ago I could never have imagined working on a grant-funded project, working with professional researchers to solve real-world issues,” she said. “I feel really lucky to be a part of a research study that has such big applications.”

She and the rest of her class have just finished setting up a growing environment for their microbes. Within the controlled setting of the lab, they placed their microbes, liquid nutrients and plastic into culture vials and will monitor the cultures for growth and plastic breakdown over the next two months.

Hoelscher-Hull’s group of three is looking to find a microbe that breaks down PET plastic and throughout the process she said she’s learned valuable skills for conducting science in the field, as well as how to do basic lab procedures. “I think the skills I’m learning right now will definitely be helpful.”

Morgan Anderson, a 20-year-old sophomore from Oregon studying fish and wildlife management and ecology elaborated, adding that they’re also learning how to design an experiment and actually manipulate real variables rather than just talk about hypothetical variables.

“I think it’s really incredible professors are taking the time to set up this class and work with us ... giving a chance for hands-on research,” she said. “It’s a really special experience that not everyone gets.”
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Man suffers severe thermal burns

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. – Late on Sept. 29, Cade Edmond Siemers, a 48-year-old U.S. citizen currently living in India, suffered severe burns to a significant portion of his body after falling into thermal water near the cone of Old Faithful Geyser.

Rangers and paramedics responded to the Old Faithful Inn at midnight where Siemers was staying. He told rangers that he had gone for a walk off boardwalk without a flashlight and tripped into a hot spring. He got himself back to his hotel room and called for assistance. Rangers detected evidence of alcohol use.

Siemers was taken by ambulance to West Yellowstone Airport and then flown by fixed-wing plane to Idaho Falls. Bad weather conditions prohibited the use of a life flight helicopter and then flown by fixed-wing plane to Idaho Falls. Bad weather conditions prohibited the use of a life flight helicopter and then flown by fixed-wing plane to Idaho Falls.

Siemers died in the hospital on Sept. 29. He had gone for a walk off boardwalk without a flashlight and tripped into a hot spring. He got himself back to his hotel room and called for assistance. Rangers detected evidence of alcohol use.

Sarah Davis named Yellowstone’s first female chief ranger

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. – Superintendent Cam Sholly announced the selection of Sarah Davis, a 20-year National Park Service veteran, as the new chief of Resource and Visitor Protection.

Davis will oversee more than 275 employees in Yellowstone’s Resource and Visitor Protection division who perform law enforcement and emergency medical services, search and rescue, wildland and structural fire, dispatch, fee collection, special use permitting, trails, corrals, and backcountry operations.

Since rangers were not at the scene of the incident, they went out at first light the next morning to investigate the thermal area. They discovered several items near the geyser, such as the man’s shoe, hat and a beer can, and they spotted footprints going to and from the geyser and blood on the boardwalk. Officials also assessed any damage to the geyser cone. The results of the investigation will be forwarded to the United States Attorney’s Office for prosecutorial review.

The ground in hydrothermal areas is fragile and thin, and there is scalding water just below the surface. Visitors are required to remain on boardwalks and exercise extreme caution around thermal features.

This is the first serious injury in a thermal area in two years. In June 2017, a man sustained severe burns after falling in a hot spring in the Lower Geyser Basin. In June 2016, a man left the boardwalk and died after slipping into a hot spring in Norris Geyser Basin.

“Sarah is an outstanding leader with a track record of high performance, strategic thinking and collaboration,” Sholly said. “We’re lucky to have her join the Yellowstone team.”

Sarah Davis has been the chief ranger at Natchez Trace Parkway since 2012. In 2016 she received the first Southeast Region Excellence Award for professional leadership among chief rangers.

Previously, Davis served as the acting superintendent at Vicksburg and Gulfport Courthouse National Military Parks, NPS branch chief of law enforcement operations, NPS acting deputy chief of operations and policy, and deputy chief ranger at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. She also held a wide range of assignments at Manassas National Battlefield Park, Independence National Historic Park, Assateague Island National Seashore and Blue Ridge Parkway.

“Is it an honor and privilege to be selected for this position,” said Davis. “I’m excited to join the Yellowstone team, and work together to protect our first national park and its visitors, and ensure the health, safety, and wellness of our employees.”

A native of Lexington, North Carolina, Davis has a Bachelor of Arts in History from Denison University in Granville, Ohio, and graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigations National Academy in 2013.

She and her two dogs, Eleanor Roosevelt and Gizzly, will settle in Yellowstone by mid-December.

Yellowstone facility seeks energy reduction

BY MARSHALL SWEARINGEN
MSU NEWS SERVICE

BOZEMAN – In Yellowstone National Park’s scenic Lamar Valley, where wolves and other wildlife are commonly sighted in sagebrush flats tucked amid mountains, a cluster of cabins marks where bison were brought back from the brink of extinction a century ago. Behind the rustic log exteriors, however, a high-tech project is underway as Montana State University and Yellowstone National Park seek to reduce energy use in the park.

“Sarah is an outstanding leader with a track record of high performance, strategic thinking and collaboration,” Sholly said. “We’re lucky to have her join the Yellowstone team.”

“We’re hoping MSU can help us understand how much energy we’re using, how it’s being used, and, looking to the future, how we can continue to reduce our energy use,” Chan said. The effort comes as some of the cabins are being renovated to add insulation and other efficiency measures. “Our goal is to try and reduce our propane use.”

For Kevin Amend, associate professor in MSU Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, the off-grid buildings present a valuable case study in how to balance the daily and seasonal variations in solar and hydroelectric energy production with the equally dynamic energy use resulting from groups of visitors coming and going.

According to Chan, the results could have an impact beyond the Lamar Buffalo Ranch. “We would like to use this as a model for other places in the park,” she said.

“There are one or two sensors in every building,” said Megan Oakleaf, an MSU junior majoring in mechanical engineering technology. The sensors measure how much energy is consumed and in general, one to each of the 16 cabins and handful of larger buildings, including two ranger residences.

The Lamar Buffalo Ranch is now used as an educational facility that hosts K-12 students from around the country. Solar panels were installed in the ’90s and were upgraded in recent years, and a small hydroelectric generator was added. The facility is off-grid, meaning no external electrical lines or natural gas pipes reach it.

Propane is still used for cooking, heating water and running a generator that provides supplemental electricity, so opportunities remain for making the facility more self-sufficient, according to Lynn Chan, a project manager for Yellowstone National Park.
An ankle injury has had me seeking out shorter and easier trails, and I’ve found myself going back time and again to the South Fork Loop. My dog Sammy loves this trail in all seasons and is equally happy whether we ski the groomed trail in the winter, or mountain bike or walk in all other seasons.

This 1-mile forested loop provides tranquility and beauty close to Town Center. Don’t let its nearness to town fool you though, as bear, moose and elk sightings have all been reported. And bring your binoculars if birding is a hobby of yours.

Named after the South Fork of the West Fork of the Gallatin River, the trail provides your canine friends a chance to cool off and get a drink, as well as the soothing sounds of moving water to take your mind off the worries of the day.

It starts out as an old logging road with a wide dirt trail that climbs a gradual hill. About 1/4 of a mile in, you will reach a signed loop junction. I prefer to continue uphill, so I follow the trail straight at the junction. A couple hundred yards beyond the sign, the trail turns into a single track with a gradual downhill. This portion of the trail is entertaining and beautiful, with glimpses of the river and wetland meadow in the distance. At the bottom of the hill you’ll parallel the river before climbing a short distance back to the junction.

Visit bscomt.org for more information about Big Sky’s parks, trails and recreation programs. 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.

Once construction is complete, from Town Center, head east on Aspen Leaf Drive for 3/4 of a mile. You will see a small parking area with a trailhead on the right-hand side of the road immediately after a bridge.
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Welcome to 2020. For those of you that love to celebrate the New Year, Oct. 1 can be officially added to the list. The U.S. Geological Survey defines the water year in the United States as a 12-month period that begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30.

“Typically, Oct. 1 is around when we start to accumulate precipitation and see a change in weather precipitation patterns from the summer,” said Lucas Zukiewicz, water supply specialist at the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

By October, the main growing season is over for the year. Shorter days and cooler temperatures mean that more rain can filter into the soil and less is removed by growing plants and sunshine. At this time of year, snow begins to fall, resulting in water banked for the next growing season.

The 2019 water year was a good one for the Gallatin watershed, according to Zukiewicz. “Snowpack was near to above normal,” he said. “It started with good precipitation early and fairly consistent snowfall. February was huge, especially in the headwaters of the Gallatin. Runoff was pretty consistent. Overall it was a better-than-average year.”

The amount and form of winter precipitation is critical for water resources in Big Sky and downstream. Most precipitation from October to April falls in the form of snow. This snow stores our local water until spring melt. At a station near the base of Big Sky Resort, average precipitation between October and April is 9.45 inches, just under half the yearly precipitation for the area at that station. These precious inches fluff up into feet of snow and are a boon for recreation.

While snow accumulation is important, it is not the only factor that affects drought and streamflow in the summer. If temperatures warm suddenly in the spring and stay high, runoff can rob the region of most of its winter precipitation early in the year, leading to late-season low streamflows. This happened in 2017, when the region experienced a “flash drought” because summer rain ceased, and temperatures soared. Late-season low streamflows can also occur when more rain and less snow falls in the winter causing water to flow downstream earlier.

Gallatin Valley farmer Doug Bracksma pointed out how much precipitation timing matters for seasonal growth. “We are on the Low Line Canal, which typically on an average year will go dry around July 15,” he said. “This year we had water all the way to the first week of August. It was due to an above-average snowpack year.”

However, August’s break from precipitation and sunny weather changed things quickly. “After [early August], we could’ve used more water on our pasture which dried up and turned brown for the most part,” he said, adding that September precipitation boosted his late-season alfalfa crop and bumped up local streamflows too.

Keeping track of precipitation is critical for recreation in Big Sky as well as downstream neighbors. This spring, the Gallatin River Task Force partnered with the USGS to install a new stream gauge at Deer Creek to track continuous flow in the Upper Gallatin. This more detailed information will help track trends in streamflow, water temperatures and pollutants. This project was funded by the Big Sky Resort Area District tax and Simms Fishing.

Get out there and celebrate water year 2020 and as you do, keep in mind how the water you see in all its forms is contributing to recreation, crops and the water we drink.

Karen Filipovich is a facilitator and consultant in the Bozeman area.
Seven fall angling essentials

BY PATRICK STRAUB
EBS FISHING COLUMNIST

There is snow on the mountains and most of the leaves have changed. For anyone clinging to summer, get over it. It is time to get serious about the fall angling season. And, for anglers looking to get more out of their fall fishing, it is important to have the right gear. Flip-flops and short sleeves can remain in the closet, while gloves and turtlenecks should be on the top of the list.

As I'm deep into the heart of my 23rd year of guiding on our local waters, my list of angling essentials has come in handy nearly each day. Here's 23 years of experience in one simple list of the seven fall angling essentials.

1. Stocking cap: A stocking cap can be placed easily over a baseball cap and can keep your noggin warm. Choose a windproof variety as well.
2. Loon Henry's Sinket: Dry-fly fishing opportunities are a little less frequent in fall—as the main hatches of blue-winged olives and October caddis are sporadic—so there are times when fishing subsurface is the name of the game. However, we may not want to use split shot to get a fly down to the target depth as fast as possible. Loon Outdoors created Henry's Sinket, a gel that is placed on the fly to help it sink fast. I use this nearly every time I fish a fly I want to sink—from rubber-leg nymphs to streamers to emerge patterns.
3. Sink-tip fly lines: Larger brown trout can become aggressive as they prepare to spawn. However, often times their best feeding is bottom. To get a big streamer to sink fast enough to be in the zone where a brown trout may take a swipe, a sink-tip fly line is crucial. Choose the fastest possible sink-rate and if I want the fly to not sink so fast, I will choose a larger, unweighted fly.
4. Soft and supple tippet for small dry flies: If the blue-winged olives hatch, because the adults are small—usually size 16 to 20—a tiny dry fly is required. In order to obtain the best possible presentation, I fish 5X or 6X and choose a tippet that is fine, supple and soft. These qualities ensure the tippet itself doesn't cause any drag and allows the tiny fly to float on the surface longer and behave more natural. Rio Suppleflex and TroutHunter Finesse are ideal.
5. Fingerless gloves: In the past two weeks I've worn my fingerless gloves a few days. Maintaining hand-dexterity is crucial to catch more fish. However, we may not want to use split shot to get a fly down to the target depth as fast as possible. Loon Outdoors created Henry's Sinket, a gel that is placed on the fly to help it sink fast. I use this nearly every time I fish a fly I want to sink—from rubber-leg nymphs to streamers to emerging patterns.
6. Fluorocarbon tippets and leaders: It pains a dry-fly snob like me to feature fluorocarbon, but, when this material was brought into fly fishing a little over two decades ago, nymph anglers rejoiced. Fluorocarbon is not only important for the two-fly indicator crowd, though; it is nearly crucial to use fluorocarbon for fishing streamers. Fluorocarbon is far more abrasion-resistant than nylon monofilament and sinks faster—two things very important when fishing streamers.

The other morning, still not fully into my coffee, I walked outside in my flip-flops and t-shirt to organize my boat for the day. Like a wooly bugger cast errantly into the back of my head, it hit me: summer is over. But then the excitement kicked in. Fall means small dry-fly fishing and large-fly streamer fishing. I walked back into my house, grabbed the things on the list above, and I didn't need the rest of my coffee to get excited for the day.

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

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

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Born and raised in the Lone Star State, Shannon Sears initially fell for southwest Montana on vacations in and around Ennis, where the avid flyfisher found “a sense of freedom, excitement and adventure that you can’t find in the big city.” Armed with a bachelor’s in communication studies from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas, Sears made the move to Big Sky in 2015, soon after her brother had settled into Bozeman and reported the many lifestyle perks of calling Gallatin County home.

In her spare time, Sears enjoys traveling the backroads of Montana to learn about the Treasure State’s unique heritage and culture off the beaten path. The history buff recently became an aunt and is looking forward to teaching her niece how to ski this winter.

Explore Big Sky: Can you tell me more about your job trajectory in Big Sky?

Shannon Sears: When I decided to move to Montana, I looked for jobs in a comparable industry to what I was already doing. After a few months of realizing this was a very different market than anything I was used to, I decided to move anyway and “figure it out” when I got here. Diverting from my “linear” path was an exciting but intimidating decision, so I was grateful when a friend told me to look into the Yellowstone Club. I started in the concierge department in the winter of 2015, and became Concierge Supervisor for the next four seasons.

EBS: Can you give me a description of your company’s roll in a typical real estate transaction?

S.S.: Title and Escrow roles serve separate, but intertwined purposes. The Title team searches property records to identify anything that could affect the interest of the new owner or their lender. The Escrow team clears those potential defects to ensure the new owner is buying a free and clear title, meaning there is nothing from a previous owner that could come back and cause financial loss to the new owner. Our company serves as a neutral third party in real estate transactions. We collect and disburse funds, facilitate document signing, and record documents at the County.

EBS: What is one of the most memorable moments you have had in your new industry?

S.S.: After much preparation, I’ll never forget receiving the call that confirmed MTE had been selected as the title company for a first-of-its-kind, multi-phase condo development project in Big Sky.

EBS: What’s the best piece of business advice that you’ve received?

S.S.: Have integrity, DO what you say you’re going to do, WHEN you say you’re going to do it, and if for any reason you can’t deliver in that timeframe, communicate new expectations and always follow through.

EBS: What insights do you have in the current real estate market in Big Sky?

S.S.: I try to stay very informed on new developments in the pipeline, and I’m very encouraged about the sustainable growth of this town. It’s exciting to see the plans that address our community’s need for affordable workforce housing.

EBS: What do you miss most about Texas?

S.S.: I miss our ranch back home, fishing for bass on a warm spring day, floating the Guadalupe River with friends, and sometimes I long for the accessibility of shopping and the abundance of restaurant options.

After four seasons as the Concierge Supervisor for the Yellowstone Club, Shannon Sears changed course and opened up the first title and escrow company in Big Sky. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHANNON SEARS
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ABSAROKEE – On Oct. 4, the Absarokee Huskies defeated Lone Peak in the cold, rain-soaked battle, 40–6. The Big Horns were playing without their senior quarterback Frankie Starz, who was held out due to injury.

Dressing only 11 players on the evening, senior Austin Samuels, who is usually on the receiving end of passes, filled in at quarterback for Lone Peak. Referring to his team’s lack of depth on the night, Lone Peak Head Coach Adam Farr said, “a lot of these players (were) new to their position. Younger players being put in the game, starting for their first time or one of their first times, became much more comfortable throughout the first half, leading into the second.”

On their first possession of the game, Absarokee was able to convert on a crucial fourth-down play and go on to score. Immediately following the touchdown, the Huskies went for an onside kick, recovered the ball, and drove down the field to find the endzone once again. At halftime, Absarokee led 34-0.

Lone Peak was able to command the ball much better in the last two quarters, even trading touchdowns with Absarokee in the second half. “At halftime it was 34-0 and then in the second half we tied, with each team scoring six. That’s particularly encouraging because they left most of their starters in the entire game,” Farr said. “Our passing game started to click. The weather cleared up a little bit and we were able to drive the ball. We only scored once, but our time of possession was much higher in the second half, which reduced the scoring opportunities for Absarokee and that was a big factor.”

Freshman fullback Pierce Farr scored the lone touchdown for LPHS in the third quarter when he found some room to run on the sideline and rushed into the endzone from about 15 yards out. “The game started in the 40s, raining sideways, and that proceeded for most of the game. [H] went away for a little while and came back for the fourth quarter. We’re a pass-heavy team, even with a backup quarterback, and that did not play itself well to our offense,” said Farr.

The Big Horns (1-4) will play their next game at home on Oct. 12 against the Ennis Mustangs at 4 p.m.
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Lady Big Horns storm back versus White Sulphur Springs

Hang tough but fall to Bruins

BY BRANDON WALKER

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS — Bus legs may have initially overcome the Lone Peak volleyball team on Oct. 4 as they traveled to face White Sulphur Springs. The Lady Big Horns found themselves trailing the Hornets two sets to none right out of the gate. But Lone Peak battled back and was able to pull off the come-from-behind victory, winning the final three sets of the match.

Lone Peak Head Coach Missy Botha noted that her team took some time to settle in, “We found ourselves down the first two sets. Then all of a sudden, they woke up and realized they’ve got to start playing some volleyball. Going into the third, they dug deep, took care of their fundamentals, and won a pretty tight set.”

White Sulphur Springs took the first two sets by scores of 25-18 and 25-19. Lone Peak took control of the match from there and won the final three 25-22, 25-14, and 15-13 respectively, to complete the comeback. “Sometimes they get out there and they maybe try a little too hard. But then they need to realize that they just need to relax and play their game.” Botha said. “I usually try to tell them the net is the same height, the ball is the same size, there’s nothing different, [just] play the ball.”

Leading the way offensively for the Lady Big Horns once again was senior Dounia Metje who had a team high nine kills and six aces. Junior Ivy Hicks had all but one of the LPHS assists—finishing the contest with 27. Defensively, senior Madi Rager and freshman Maddie Cone had two blocks apiece for Lone Peak, while junior Chloie Hammond led the team with 17 digs.

The following day the Lady Big Horns competed in the Manhattan Christian Invitational tournament. The exhibition contests did not count towards the teams’ overall season record, but they fought hard winning three games and losing another three. They faced familiar foes such as Gardiner and Shields Valley along with some strong class-B opponents.

BIG SKY – Missing two of their senior starters, the Lone Peak High School volleyball team fell to Gardiner on Oct. 8 in straight sets. The Big Horns hung tough, but the Bruins came out on top as they won 26-24, 25-19, and 25-19.

During each of the first two sets, Gardiner seemed to be in control for most of the way, but Lone Peak made a late charge to almost steal the first. After being down by four points late, they scored six of the next seven, bringing the score to 24-23. They had Gardiner at set point, before the Bruins were able to thwart the comeback and clinch the first set.

In the second set, Lone Peak trailed by 10 points, but were able to bring themselves to within four before Gardiner was able to deny the comeback once again. The third set was neck and neck the entire way. With the score at 19-21, in favor of the Bruins, Gardiner was able to score the next four points to end the match.

Seniors Dounia Metje and Madi Rager were out for the contest due to illness. Freshman Maddie Cone and Jessie Bough stepped in to fill their spots. Lone Peak Head Coach Missy Botha was very pleased with how her team performed. “Considering we had a whole new lineup, new faces in different positions, I thought the girls played fantastic. They played their hearts out,” said Botha. “It’s actually kind of exciting to see those younger players perform now at that level because they’ve got three more years of that.”

Bruin junior Josie Thomas, who had a match high 11 kills, and senior Kyndra Long, who tied for the Gardiner team lead with three aces, were a tough one-two punch for LPHS to slow down all night. “Gardiner is historically a good team, so that’s what we were up against with a new lineup,” said Botha. “I was happy to see Chloie getting those bombs up and the whole back row really came to play defensively.”

The Lady Big Horns were paced by junior Reilly Germain, who had four kills. Sophomore TJ Nordahl led the team with five blocks, while junior Chloie Hammond had a team high seven digs. Junior Ivy Hicks was the leader with 18 assists and senior Emery Miller had two aces for Lone Peak. Lone Peak (7-3) will travel to take on Manhattan Christian on Oct. 11.
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Lone Peak Composite Team wraps up season with Copper City trails race

BY DOUG HARE

BIG SKY – On Saturday, Oct. 5, the Lone Peak Composite Team finished their third season in style with multiple podium and top-ten finishes after the dust had settled from their 3-plus mile race on Copper City trails outside of Three Forks, Montana.

In their first two seasons, members of the LPCT had competed in the Idaho league of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA). This season marked the first year that NICA offered a Montana-based race circuit, and the team’s first competition on courses in the Treasure State.

“The weekend went well. It was a good way to end the season. I’m really proud of the way the kids competed in all four races” Coach Matt Jennings said. “It was nice to race on the trails in our own home state this year. And we got Girls Ride Together off the ground this year, which will hopefully encourage even more females to get out and ride.”

Jennings helped coach the squad this season along with John Flach, Alex Hassman, Polly Buotte, Scott Jacobsen, Danielle McClain and Chris Wilson. The LPCT continues to grow its team with 15 athletes signed up this year. Six racers competed regularly throughout the season: Max Seelye, Matthew Jennings, Henry Flach, Kjetil Hassman, Wren Hassman and Hazel Buotte.

“It was really a fun season,” said Coach John Flach. “The kids did well and it was nice getting to know some of the parents better—even if we probably had to drive further than when we competed in Idaho.”
Bozeman goes pink for October: Community Partners create PNKBZN to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BY PNKBZM

BOZEMAN — The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 890 women in the state of Montana will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2019. In the greater Gallatin Valley, in 2018 one fourth of breast cancers were diagnosed in women under the age of 50. And, while not as common, men are diagnosed with breast cancer; approximately 2,600 men a year throughout the United States. National Breast Cancer Awareness Month was designated as October in 1985 to raise awareness and gain funding for research for a cure, while elevating education around the importance of annual and early screening.

PNKBZN, a community-wide campaign for the month of October, is the result of collaboration and ideas from local Bozeman organizations: Advanced Medical Imaging, Bozeman Health, Cancer Support Community, Downtown Bozeman Partnership, Montana State University and Montana State University Athletics, with graphic design support from PRIME Incorporated.

PNKBZN seeks to enhance local awareness of the importance of following screening guidelines for breast care, how to access screenings and diagnostic screenings and other resources, increase the community conversation around cancer awareness, and provide inspirational stories of men and women in our community who are living with breast cancer.

Downtown Bozeman will turn pink for the entire month of October with pink street banners lining Main Street, window decorations featuring cancer survivor stories and breast cancer facts, and Pack the Place in Pink information. A calendar of associated events, community resources, and programs is located at PinkBozeman.com, hosted by PNKBZN community partners, with inclusions from other community partners. To learn more or get involved, fill out the form at PinkBozeman.com.

PinkBozeman.com
20 questions to know yourself better

BY LINDA ARNOLD
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

How well do you know yourself?

It’s such a simple question, yet many of us are running on autopilot these days, just trying to make it through the day. And then a sense of emptiness creeps in.

Greek philosopher Aristotle once said, “Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” Fast forward to today:

Self-awareness is one of the biggest buzz phrases related to happiness, productivity and personal growth.

And it can be one of the most difficult things to master in life, observes author Darius Foroux, who has come up with an inquiry system to shed light on this elusive topic.

There are no right or wrong answers. We’re all different, and the only person who can teach you self-awareness is you. Take a look at these inquiring probes to see if any “a-ha” moments come up for you.

Just answer with the first thing that pops into your mind. Everyone interprets these questions differently. And it’s OK to say, “I don’t know.” That can leave clues about where you need to focus.

What am I good at?
What am I bad at?
What am I so-so at?
Who are the most important people in my life?
What are my most important principles?
What type of person do I want to be?
What stresses me out?
What relaxes me?
What’s my definition of success?
What type of worker am I?

How do I want others to see me?
What makes me sad?
What makes me happy?
What makes me angry?
What am I afraid of?
What type of friend do I want to be?
What do I think about myself?
What do I value in life?
Which things about myself make me proud?
Where do I see myself in five years?

Use the information you’ve gleaned to make any necessary course corrections. We get so caught up in our outer worlds that it’s easy to lose ourselves. Are you spinning your wheels or putting your energy into the wrong areas?

Look at including more advantageous things in your life and eliminating the harmful things, as much as possible:

Do more things that make you happy.
Do more things you’re good at.
Dial down things you’re bad at.
Avoid things that make you unhappy.

I need to raise a caution flag here. Things aren’t always so black and white. For example, relationships can make you both happy and sad. That doesn’t mean you should avoid relationships altogether. Just avoid the things that make your relationships bad: lying, lack of empathy, etc.

The more you practice, the more self-aware you’ll become. Introspection is difficult because you need to be honest with yourself. And lots of times it’s easier to cover things up because the truth can be scary. But following your own compass is always better than losing yourself in the crowd.

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 or visit lindaarnold.org for more information on her books.
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**American Life in Poetry: Column 758**

**BY TED KOOSER**  
**U.S. POET LAUREATE**

I’d guess that at least every other person reading this column did at one time, as a child, carry home some animal that he or she wouldn’t be able to keep. Here’s Connie Wanek, who lives in New Mexico, remembering her son in just such a moment. Connie’s most recent book is a collection of her “Mrs. God” poems called Consider the Lilies, published by Will o’ the Wisps Books.

**Rain Changing to Snow**  
By Connie Wanek

He came home from middle school with a wet kitten tucked inside his black leather jacket.  
He’d found it shivering in the tall grass flattened by rain.  
It could only belong to him for fifteen minutes and it understood that, I think.  
Though just a few weeks old, already it expected disappointment.  
Yet it began to purr, this scrap of cloud-gray fur, as he drew it forth to show me.  
Cautious (its name he said), so lonely and hungry after the shipwreck of another day at school.

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**CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

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**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

- ACEA ALAE ABB
- STAR BANANRE UHNOY
- ANEW ABODE PROHIBIT SLOT RAGAN LOGOU
- SMIKE NARAHAR SABER
- NAGARA X CANNABIS OMER AMU TACK BIM AT REMA

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**“Ronin”**

- Sturgill Simpson

One of country music’s most iconoclastic stars just dropped Sound and Fury, the 41-year-old Kentucky native’s fourth album. The album’s leadoff song, named after a wandering samurai with no master, comes out of left field—car noises, radio tuning, Alex Jones ranting—but quickly evolves into a swampy extended guitar solo that lays bare Simpson’s existential angst his uniquely defiant sound. Buckle up. Fans of seventies country songs might not get it at first, but the psychedelic blues riffs of “Ronin” are just the start of Sturgill Simpson’s most audacious release to date.
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Love, wolves and Big Sky’s community theater

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – Playwright Allyson Adams, former mayor of nearby Virginia City, was baptized in show business, having been born in the cradle of American entertainment: Hollywood, Los Angeles, California.

Daughter of Nick Adams, an Oscar-nominated actor that had good friends in high places—Elvis Presley, for one—Adams was destined to find a career in the field, ultimately choosing theater as her medium.

Good theater, as any longstanding patron will tell you, is not defined by the size of the auditorium, rich red velvet curtains, or the notoriety of the cast. When Adams first debuted “HOWL! A Montana Love Story,” a play she wrote set to premiere in its current iteration at the Warren Miller Performing Arts stage on Nov. 14 and 15, it was under far more humble pretense: it was originally dubbed “The People vs. Hairy Wolf,” and was performed by children, while an Ennis furniture store served as the setting.

The venue wasn’t Adams’ first choice, but no one else in the small Madison County town wanted to host what they perceived to be a controversial beast of performance. The year was 1997, just two years after wolves were reintroduced into Yellowstone National Park, a move that set a rift between many conservationists who wanted wolves on the landscape and farmers and ranchers concerned about predation on their livestock.

“It was so controversial that rancher parents pulled their kids,” Adams said. “The school wouldn’t let us do it in their theater and the Virginia City Opera House wouldn’t let us do it, either. Pretty much no one in a 50-mile radius [would] because it was so controversial.”

Nearly 20 years later, the concept still raises ire with many livestock producers in southwestern Montana, southeastern Idaho and northwestern Wyoming, but the infamous canines have thrived, bringing, in many instances, a semblance of balance to the ecosystems of the Greater Yellowstone.

Those in that first audience found a surprisingly balanced take on the issue, neither pro wolf nor pro farmer, and while the play has evolved in storyline since then, it has maintained that fairness.

According to Adams, the show is based on a specific wolf: wolf No. 39F, the “White Wolf.”

Prior to writing the play, Adams read an article about the death of No. 39F, an original alpha female for the Lamar Valley’s Druid Peak Pack, shot dead in Sunlight Basin area east of Yellowstone.

“That article got me so upset, and that’s where the play came from.”

Adams, a seasoned writer and director, has been able to roll with the punches in bringing the play to Big Sky for the first-ever fall Community Theater production.

Auditions held on Sept. 10 yielded a female-heavy turnout, and with the lead biologist character based on Doug Smith, the leader for the park’s Yellowstone Wolf Project, Adams was quick to adapt, modeling the character after a researcher at Ted Turner’s Flying D Ranch.

“We ended up reading the biologist as a woman, then changed it, and it honestly works better,” Adams said.

Adams’ agility is also due in part to her sharing the creative load with Cara Wilder, an experienced Bozemanite director who has collaborated with Adams on other projects in the past.

“We moved here in ’73, so I’m not a native but I consider myself local,” Wilder said. “I moved back to Bozeman in ’95, right when the reintroduction was happening … Wolves are pretty magical animals, people have this connection with them.”

According to Wilder, the opening night of the show might be tailed by a panel discussion on the status of the population and reintroduction more than 25 years since its genesis, with panelist representation on both sides of the issue.

She’s also excited to partner with WMPAC.

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She’s also excited to partner with WMPAC.

“It’s the most beautiful theater, and I’m so excited to be working in that space,” Wilder said. “I was thrilled when John Zirkle [WMPAC artistic director] asked me to be a part of this piece.”

Adams made her acting debut at one year old, setting the stage for a wealth of theater and entertainment experience that has since translated into producing over 30 plays in her lifetime. Don’t miss the latest, the premiere of “HOWL! A Montana Love Story” on the WMPAC stage, as we who live in southwest Montana all have a role in the story.
**BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR**
**FRIDAY, OCT. 11 – THURSDAY, OCT. 24**
*If your event falls between Oct. 25 and Nov. 7, please submit it by Oct. 30 by emailing media@outlaw.partners*

**SATURDAY, OCT. 12**
Winter Farmer’s Market
The Emerson Center for The Arts and Culture, Bozeman, 9:00 a.m.

Live Performance: Cashore Marionettes
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, 6:30 p.m.

Montana State University vs. Sacramento State
Bobcat Stadium, Bozeman, 2:00 p.m.

**MONDAY, OCT. 14**
Indigenous People’s Day Event
Crow Astronomy
Museum of The Rockies, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 16**
Awareness Wednesday
What's So Super about Superfoods anyway? With Nancy Ruby
Santosha Wellness Center, Big Sky, 7 p.m.

Science Inquiry Lecture
Restoring Forests in a Time of Change
Museum of The Rockies, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

Live Music: Lucy Daucus
Rialto Bozeman, 7:00 p.m.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 18**
Live Music: Martin Sexton
The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 19**
2019 Great Pumpkin Giveaway
Fire Pit Park, Big Sky, 12 p.m.

Lecture: Why Meditate?
The Emerson Center for The Arts and Culture, Bozeman, 7:00 p.m.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 24**
Haunted Peaks Block Party
Costume Party, Live Music: The Magic Beans
Town Center Ave., Big Sky, 7 p.m.

Lecture: Butterflies as Ecological Indicators
Museum of The Rockies, Bozeman, 7 p.m.

Lobster Fest
Lone Peak Brewery, Big Sky

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**WORTH THE DRIVE**

**The Wailers**
Pub Station Ballroom, Billings
Oct. 15, 8:00 p.m.

Robert Nesta Marley was born in the central Jamaican mountain village of Nine Mile in 1945, moving with his mother at age 12 to the Trench Town neighborhood of the national capital Kingston. A supporter of Rastafarianism, the legalization of marijuana and Pan-Africanism, Marley is considered one of the most significant cultural influencers of the last four decades. At the age of 36, the reggae artist died in 1981 due to complications from cancer, but was posthumously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, an induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, song of the millennium (“One Love”) by BBC and an induction into the U.K. Music Hall of Fame. Bob Marley & The Wailers’ album “Exodus,” which contains world-famous tracks “Exodus,” “Waiting in Vain,” “Jamming” and “One Love,” topped British album charts for 56 consecutive weeks. Reggae fan or not, don’t miss this opportunity to see some of the musicians that made it all happen, The Wailers themselves, in the flesh.

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**RECYCLE**

Enjoy our publication and please remember to recycle.

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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.
The whimsical Western worlds of Jenni Lowe

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BOZEMAN – A multicolor composition depicting a posse of five skunks nosing through Indian Paintbrush wildflowers as magpies look on, aptly titled “Stinkers,” hangs in the back corner of Visions West Gallery, the contemporary Western art showroom on Main Street in downtown Bozeman.

The synthesis of these black- and white-patterned creatures evokes a story: Jenni Lowe-Anker’s grandmother would feed food scraps to the Western birds from their home in Missoula, attracting the smelly scavengers in droves.

What says more, however, is that these two creatures are traditionally maligned; skunks for their pungent weaponry and magpies for often-vicious scavenging tactics, such as raiding other birds’ nests to eat their eggs and young.

But in the piece “Stinkers,” carefully crafted by Jenni Lowe, as she’s known in the art world, the animals are handsome and charming, balancing the colors of their surroundings with their lack of pigment to create a swirling, “whimsical” dance of animal life.

For Lowe-Anker, capturing the creatures of Montana and the lifestyles of the region is a life’s work, underscoring her legacy here in the Treasure State and the emphasis she places on its wildlife.

To understand that drive is to simply look back on her heritage as the great granddaughter of Montana homesteaders that settled in the Missoula area, to her early days growing up cowgirlin on those same plots of land, to spending many a day in, on and around the incredible natural features of this great and expansive corner of the Lower 48.

“If her Big Sky Country roots weren’t evident enough to the Montana bottled into each piece, take the fact that she exclusively uses cattle/livestock markers, a pastel- and paint-like medium used to mark animals and stock in auction and ranching settings.”

“They come in about 10 colors, so I do a lot of blending,” Lowe-Anker said of the “folk medium,” as she calls it. “It means you have to have a very intimate understanding of color.”

According to Lowe-Anker, her style started off “rudimentary and simple,” and over time has adopted a more realistic quality. Still, they uphold a calling card of Lowe-Anker’s work.

“They always had and will have a very whimsical nature to them,” she said from her Bozeman studio in early October. “And that’s present in the portrayal of the wildlife and imagery I grew up with in Montana.”

Lowe-Anker’s connection to nature has provided her with an acute awareness of the effects climate change has rendered, a consciousness she’s proud to have passed on to her three adult sons she raised with world-famous alpinist Conrad Anker after Alex Lowe, their biological father and Anker’s friend and climbing partner, died in an avalanche during a Nepal ski mountaineering expedition in October of 1999.

“With species declining more rapidly than they ever have in the history of mankind, it’s dire,” Lowe-Anker said. “So when I look outside and see a nuthatch at my feeder, I think, ‘thank God they’re still here.’ To me that’s joy, to see those species still here, to be there for them and to protect them.”

She conveys that joy to show audiences and patrons over her more than 30-year-long career, a unique form of conservation advocacy that celebrates what remains.

“One-third of all birds have died in the last 30 years,” she said. “That’s a statistic the Audubon Society has put out. That’s horrible. Do you want a painting of a bunch of dead birds?”

Lowe-Anker calls a piece hanging in the front entrance of Visions West, “Polar Vortex,” among her more aggressive in its pro-conservation messaging. Named after the harsh winter conditions that descended upon the region last winter, it portrays artic foxes, wolves and hares, polar bears, and a white ermine assembled across a sheet of snow and ice.

The animals look regal. They look comfortable in their arctic habitat, seemingly unaware of the environmental peril rushing to meet them. Words lace the spaces between them: “Climate Change is a Global Crisis Bold Action Needed.” Beneath them, etched into their shadows: “The artic is warming faster than any region on Earth,” and “1/3 of species predicted to be extinct by 2050.”

Listen to Lowe-Anker: Thank god these creatures, like the humble nuthatch, are still here—it’s reason enough relish in art, like hers, that represents them as they are in existence, full of spirit and whimsy.
“The Mustang” is a humble coming-of-age story that saw a limited theatrical release earlier this year after being picked up by Focus Features at the Sundance Film Festival. Its formula and simple premise are straightforward and serve up nothing really new on the screen, but that simplicity along with the use of “narrow” cinematography style and minimal dialogue deliver the thoughtful moments of beauty and intrigue with some punch.

The film opens with a paragraph of text informing us of the existence of the wild horse training program at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center—due to the over-populated wild horses in Nevada, the government corrals thousands of horses each year to be euthanized or trained to be later sold at auction.

At the center of “The Mustang” is up-and-coming actor Matthias Schoenaerts, who brings a strong and stoic subtlety to the role of Roman Coleman, an inmate at a remote American prison. The film opens with Roman speaking with an anger-management counselor (Connie Britton), who is trying her best to get Roman to cooperate so he can be placed back in general population after a confrontation with a fellow prisoner. The only thing he admits to is that he’s bad with people; this comment prompts her to secure him a job shoveling horse manure as part of the prison’s wild horse training program.

On the first day on his work assignment, a particularly spirited horse catches Roman’s attention. He names it Marcus. The program lead, Myles (a fantastically grumpy Bruce Dern), recognizes the anger Marcus and Roman share, and from there out Myles and Roman are given the most screen time from writer/director Laure de Clermont-Tonnerre. And aside from one gruesome moment with a fellow horse trainer, they are the only two afforded close-up shots in the entire film, providing acute intimacy.

“The Mustang” has a bit of 2017’s “The Rider” and “Lean on Pete” at its core, which means it also is a must-see treaterker. Instead of a youthful coming-of-age story like the other two fantastic horse films, it’s about an adult finding his identity as a man. Owen Gleiberman said it best in his glowing review of “The Mustang”: “The movie is less about a convict who becomes a horse whisperer than about a horse who becomes a convict whisperer.”

I can’t recommend “The Mustang” enough. It is a psalm of grace and mercy, which the director bestows on Roman and Marcus throughout the film and in its final sententious shot. No spoiler for you, though.

“The Mustang” is available for rental from the Big Sky Community Library, Google Play and Amazon.

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.
North Wind brings tech, new music to WMPAC
First installation in fall miniseries

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – On Oct. 1, Ray Li, aka North Wind, dazzled Big Sky audiences at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center with his unique synthesis of technology, kinetics and music.

Dubbed a “virtual reality DJ,” Li, who earned a bachelor’s degree in engineering physics and applied physics from world-renowned Cornell University, plied that expertise in the niche science of creating a one-of-a-kind sound system that incorporates DJ’s traditional tools—sound pad, keyboard, foot pedals, dials and knobs—with a motion sensor that allows the Las Vegas-native to use simple hand movements to warp sound.

North Wind, declared a “Renaissance-level” creative by the Discovery Channel, was the first in an inaugural fall miniseries at WMPAC designed to bolster a traditionally quieter time in Big Sky.

For John Zirkle, WMPAC’s executive director, programs are about building an artistic infrastructure that nurtures culture and patrons of all walks, setting the stage for a consistency that audiences can rely on for years to come.

“As the town grows, so too should that mission and focus on infrastructure,” Zirkle said. “Fall is something we’ve been looking at experimenting with over years.”

“We had 150 people in the theater, which was a huge success for an Oct. 1 performance,” he added. “Not only did it feel like a really full crowd for this time of the year, but it was quite a diverse crowd, with more than a handful visiting the WMPAC for the very first time … We loved [the] originality of his story, and we’re proud to have been his first stage on his first tour. The WMPAC sets the stage for creativity in Big Sky, Montana. I’d say mission accomplished.”

Be sure to catch the second fall miniseries installment, “The Cashore Marionettes,” on Saturday, Oct. 12 featuring puppeteer Joseph Cashore who has been performing for more than 30 years and is considered one of the premier practitioners of the art form. Visit warrenmillerpac.org for more information.
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IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION INCLUDED IN
Not all snacks were created equal.

If you enjoy “Combos,” cheese, peanut butter and pizza flavoring-filled pretzels sold at most convenience stores, for example, there may be something terribly wrong with your palate.

Of course, I have been known to finish whole cartons of “Flavor Blasted Goldfish” in one sitting, washing down the artificial cheddar goodness with a bag of “Bold Chex Mix” for good measure. The point being, I’m no snob as to the ingredients and composition of my mass-produced bags of savory delights—disodium phosphate, partially hydrogenated soybean, maltodextrin and monosodium glutamate (MSG)? Keep ’em coming.

There is, however, a hierarchy of snacks and I will argue for my favorites tooth and nail. Especially when the “grandma factor” is to be considered.

My grandmother, “Mamie,” always has a bin of seasoned oyster crackers when I arrive to her California home—and because she’s my grandma, they are the holy grail of snacks.

Mamie borrowed the recipe from her mother-in-law, my great grandmother, Annie May McClucas, a sweet woman who was a veritable parlor shark. She would just as soon school you in cards as transfix you with stories about Chicago’s good old days.

Like any good host, Annie May, who lived into my early 20s, knew to provide food and drink and lively conversation in her parlor—the former “combo,” to borrow a term, consisting of booze and, you guessed it; “Annie May’s Oyster Crackers.”

Now, there’s nothing wrong with Gardetto’s or wasabi-coated dried peas—I’ll snap those up any day of the week—but for your next soiree, impress your guests with a simple, tasty homemade snack that will leave them too distracted to foray into religion or politics.

Recipe:
Prep time: 3 minutes
Cook time: 1 minute

Ingredients:
11 ounce package of oyster crackers
5/8 cup vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon dried dill
1 ounce package Hidden Valley Ranch Dressing Salad and Seasoning Mix

Instructions:
Toss oyster crackers and vegetable oil in plastic bag, coating evenly. Add spices and seasoning mix, toss until coated evenly. Toss again in paper bag to remove excess oil and allow to settle. Transfer to decorative bowl and enjoy!
Mi Pueblito brought the heat opening season

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

BIG SKY – No, authentic tacos aren’t made with Ortega brand hard-shells, shredded lettuce and cheddar cheese, sliced cherry tomatoes, “dollops of Daisy” and packet-spiced ground beef.

The real deal, much like many a tasty cuisine, is much, much simpler than that: masa tortillas, no more than 4 inches in diameter, topped with spiced meats like asada, pastor and lengua, diced onions, and cilantro complete the picture. Garnish with pickled carrot and chili for flair.

Genuine is what the Mi Pueblito, “My Little Town,” Taco Bus has brought to the Big Sky food community since its opening in late May, with the speed and consistency evocative of the Mexican food stalls thousands of miles away that inspired it. You can thank owner and operator Victor Montaña, 24, for that.

Montaña—fitting name, no?—learned the ins and outs of the mobile taco and Mexican food business from his two uncles who own similar shops in Blackfoot, Idaho, and Belgrade. He cooked for them for around five years before venturing out on his own.

“It was a good business to get in, and learning from them was helpful,” Montaña said.

Montaña, a native of Chicago, has family roots in the southwestern Mexican state Jalisco, and lived there for a period before returning to the U.S.

Despite a slightly colder climate, he says he likes Big Sky and appreciates the change of scenery—in Montaña’s eyes, the alpine pueblito is a great place to work.

“It’s a good place,” Montaña said. “And I love the mountains.”

Located next to Ace Hardware off Lone Mountain Trail, Mi Pueblito’s white and powder-blue façade provides Montaña plenty of mountains to look at—the same is naturally true for his guests, who, on a nice day, can sit at picnic tables adjacent to the bus’ shell under an array of string lights.

Rain? Snow? No problem—grab a seat on the bench-style offerings in the chrome interior of the bus, just beyond the order window.

Historically, businesses in Big Sky struggle to keep doors open during quieter times, and in some instances even in peak visitation months, but Mi Pueblito Taco Bus patrons have come to enjoy a consistency in product and order-to-serve time that keeps them coming back—authentic, delicious tastes of the motherland aside.

What’s the secret? Low overhead, quality recipes and ingredients, and trustworthy friends and family staffing the operation, says Montaña.

“He’s a friend of mine,” Montaña said, pointing at the order window and the two staffers beyond. “And he grew up in the state I lived. My uncles helped me too.”

With plans to stay open throughout the winter, Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Montaña has no plans to abandon the ethic and reliable service that has provided his taco bus with staying power and loyal customers. A little heat to beat the cold, perfect.

Big Sky Country Brew: End of the Saison

Beehive Basin Brewery

EBS STAFF

The saison, French for “season,” doesn’t matter much when drinking an End of the Saison pint from Big Sky’s Beehive Basin Brewery, located just south of Lone Mountain Trail. According to co-owner and co-brewmaster Andy Liedberg that’s because the beer in question, with light, earthy and pear tasting notes and a modest 5.6 percent ABV, pairs well with food and all four seasons due to its refreshing, malty nature. Made with Saaz hops, a Noble hop variety with an “earthy spiciness to it,” says Liedberg, this saison is a must-try for the local beer connoisseur. But don’t think you can dilly-dally before getting a glass—Beehive Basin Brewery brews just one tank a year with a specialty blended Belgian and Saison yeast strain. And believe us, those that have tasted it will be back for more while supplies last.
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What’s so Super about Superfoods?
10/16 7:00-8:00pm.

NEW FALL SCHEDULE

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<td>10:00 -11:30am All Levels Yoga</td>
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<td>7:30-8:30am</td>
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<td>5:00-6:15pm Warm Yin/Restorative Yoga</td>
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<td>All Levels Yoga*</td>
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<td>4:15-5:15pm Slow Flow Yoga*</td>
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*special $10 drop in rate for Big Sky workforce first visit always $10 - any class
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.

The ABCs on MSG

BY SCOTT MECHURA
ERS FOOD COLUMNIST

If you’ve read anything I’ve written over the years, you’ve come to learn here, if not anywhere else, that food is perhaps the most universal connector of cultures and generations. Food knows no ethnicity, wealth or politics. It simply warms our hearts.

But we also have disagreements on such benign issues as Coke or Pepsi, to the Eastern world’s disdain for blue cheese, and our likewise feelings about fermented tofu.

But one ingredient has topped them all.

A Chinese man by the name of Robert Ho Man Kwok sent a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine in 1968, in which he described symptoms of headache, heart palpitations and numbness in the back of his neck which would eventually move to his arms and back. He said these symptoms would come on 20 minutes after eating what he described as “northern Chinese food.”

With little to no research, the journal arbitrarily associated his symptoms with MSG and one editor called it “Chinese Restaurant Syndrome.” Finally, other sufferers had a name for what they thought they felt, and almost overnight MSG became a vilified ingredient.

To this day, it carries such a stigma that I cannot think of another food or ingredient that divides more people with such myopic conviction.

A University of Tokyo chemistry professor wanted to know what made dashi broth so tasty. In 1907 he isolated the ingredients behind it: monosodium glutamate. He developed a white granular seasoning and started a company, Ahi-no-moto, which is still the standard commercially sold product today.

So just what is MSG made from? It is nothing more than the sodium extracted from glutamic acid. And glutamic acid is one of the most abundant, naturally occurring amino acids in our body. It is also common in many cheeses, tomatoes and most mushrooms, particularly shiitakes. One of the best sources of glutamic acid is human breast milk, which contains 10 times the amount found in cow or goat’s milk.

Additionally, glutamic acid is required by our brains for healthy function. And while it has been commonplace for many east Asian cultures to season food with MSG, which comes in a white granulated form, just like table salt, it is incorporated into many processed foods millions of people consume every day. Doritos is a prime example.

But much like other salts or sugar, there is a flavor limit. Add too much of any of these three, and the flavor is hijacked and becomes off-putting. The million-dollar question since that fateful letter to the editor in 1968: Are the allergies real?

The reality is that despite several studies over the decades, there is no substantial or scientific evidence that humans have any allergies to MSG. More importantly, it has stood up to every placebo-controlled, double blinded study.

So for lack of any better location to file it under, scientists put the MSG allergy into the category of phenomenon. Which means they recognize that some people can feel differently when they eat it, but it is most likely due to improper ratio of usage. For example, if you consume a lot of sugar, it enhances your energy only to come down later like other drugs. Or when your body retains water from excessive salt intake.

The takeaway? Feel free to avoid it next time you are dining in an Asian (primarily Chinese or Japanese) restaurant, but know this: It is highly likely you have been consuming it on a regular basis for decades.

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.
You’re Invited! Wednesday, October 19th is National Support Your Local Chamber of Commerce Day, and we invite you to share your stories with us at #SupportYourLocalChamberOfCommerce and #BigSkyBiz about how the Big Sky Chamber, its board and staff, 450 member businesses and their thousands of employees have helped to build Big Sky’s economy and contributed to a healthy community.

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