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Big Sky

July 17 - 30, 2020
Volume 11 // Issue #15

Montana masks up
Big Sky's busy summer

***Yellowstone Club proposes land exchange
with Forest Service***

Writer, artist duo chronicle pandemic life

Golf marathon raises funds for nonprofit



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ON THE COVER:

On July 15, Gov. Steve Bullock passed a statewide mandatory mask mandate for all counties who currently have four or more active cases of COVID-19.
COVER ILLUSTRATION BY ME BROWN

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Montana masks up

Effective July 15, Gov. Steve Bullock issued a mandatory statewide mask requirement for counties with four or more active cases of COVID-19. This directive applies to certain indoor spaces and certain organized outdoor activities with 50 or more people in attendance where social distancing is not possible.
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Big Sky's busy summer

Everyone's talking about the license plates. In parking lots and on roads throughout Big Sky, droves of cars registered to states around the country indicate an unusually usual pattern for the destination town's summer season: tourism. Especially as COVID-19 cases spike across Montana.
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Yellowstone Club proposes land exchange with Forest Service

If the proposal is approved, YC could hand the U.S. Forest Service 558 acres in exchange for 500 acres in the Madison Range adjacent to the club to expand skiing operations and offer additional public access. In a third part of the deal, 5,205 privately owned acres within the Crazy Mountains would be allocated to the Forest Service.
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Writer, artist duo chronicle pandemic life

Writer and part-time Big Sky resident Tom Vandel and painter Karen Wippich created their journal-style art book that captures the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic from different perspectives.
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Golf marathon raises funds for nonprofit

The day began at 7:30 a.m. as Mark Wehrman teed off with his driver, slicing through the slight breeze of the cool morning. It concluded at 8:30 p.m. with Brad Rierson's putt on the 100th hole, completing the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Country golf marathon.

Opening Shot



Gallatin County Sheriff Brian Gootkin addresses frustrated members of the public after the Gallatin City-County Board of Health postponed their vote on a mask mandate. The meeting was shut down before even starting when members of the public refused to leave when asked to in order to meet state social distancing occupancy requirements.

Gootkin, along with health board member and Gallatin County Commissioner Joe Skinner, stayed after the board left the building to answer questions from the public. PHOTO BY BELLA BUTLER

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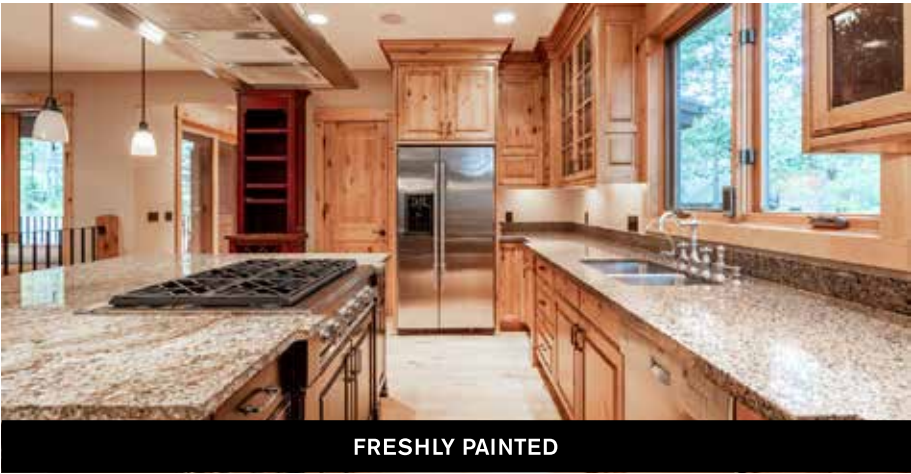
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A vote on implementing a face covering mandate in Gallatin County was scheduled to take place at the July 14 Gallatin City-County Board of Health meeting, but the meeting was postponed when members of the public refused to leave when asked to in order to meet state social distancing occupancy requirements. Meeting attendees arrived with anti-mask protest signs and prepared comments.

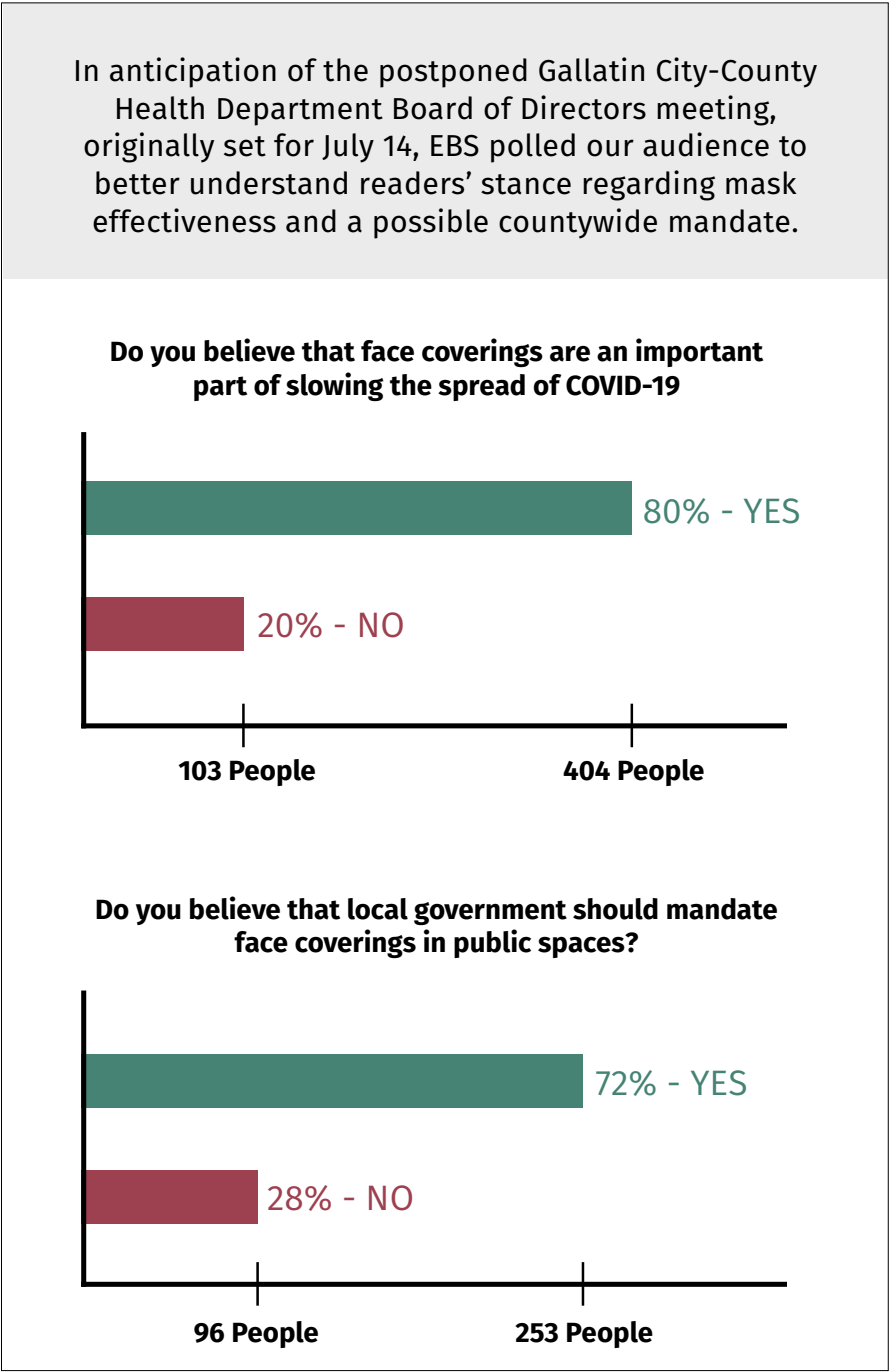
On July 15, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock announced a face covering mandate for the entire state, effective immediately. See page 12 for more details.



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A letter from Montana’s Law Enforcement leaders

MONTANA SHERIFF AND PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

As a nation, state and society we are living in unprecedented times. As peace officer leaders in the State of Montana, we feel it is our obligation to speak about the unnecessary injuries and deaths, suffered by any persons, at the hands of law enforcement officers who fail or refuse to live by our peace officer code of ethics. We collectively acknowledge that incidents of excessive use of force, violence and misconduct are unacceptable and contradictory to our professional training, ethics, and personal morals.

In every community of Montana, peace officers work to protect public safety. We are your police officers, sheriff deputies, troopers, corrections officers, game wardens, motor carrier officers, and more. Every day, we put our lives on the line so you can live, work, travel, and recreate safely. In striving to fulfill our oaths and follow our code of ethics, Montana’s peace officers have earned the respect and trust of the citizens we serve.

Montana’s peace officers receive top-notch training at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy and in the field. Among other things, we are taught how to de-escalate tense situations, how to uphold citizens’ rights while protecting public safety, how to respect people of all backgrounds and circumstances in the course of our work, and how to use force only as a last resort. We measure the effectiveness of that training by the record of our officers. Our record is strong.

Montanans expect the highest standards of conduct from their peace officers. You rightly expect appropriate disciplinary and legal action is taken when an officer is found to have violated the oath, the code of ethics, or the laws governing our state and nation. We are committed to this.

As leaders of law enforcement agencies, we strive to be transparent, accessible, and accountable. We continually evaluate policies and practices to ensure they meet the needs of our communities. To that end, we welcome and encourage input from our fellow citizens and our elected officials. Positive, civil, and constructive engagement is the path to genuine community-oriented law enforcement that protects public safety and the rights of all citizens.

We are members of the communities we serve. We want to thank the citizens who have shown support for Montana peace officers. We are lucky to live and work in a state that overwhelmingly supports us. As Montanans, let’s continue working together and recommit ourselves to the shared values that make our home the last best place.

Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association
Montana Association of Chiefs of Police
Montana Police Protective Association
Association of Montana Troopers

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Music in the Mountains Goes Virtual With Kitchen Dwellers July 23

ARTS COUNCIL OF BIG SKY

The Arts Council of Big Sky continues its virtual Music in the Mountains concert series with the Kitchen Dwellers performing on Thursday, July 23, on the stage at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center. The live performance, sponsored by Big Sky Landscaping, will be streamed for free and is available to watch on the Arts Council's YouTube channel and Facebook page starting at 7 p.m.

"This all started as a series of jam sessions in the kitchen," says Joe Funk, bassist for the breakout progressive bluegrass band Kitchen Dwellers. "We were getting together to play covers and traditional music and old-time tunes for fun after school, and everything else just really evolved from there."

For Kitchen Dwellers, "everything else," as Funk so modestly puts it, has been nothing short of remarkable. In the near decade they've been together, the Bozeman-based four-piece has performed for thousands at Red Rocks, shared bills with the likes of Railroad Earth, The Infamous String Dusters, and Twiddle, graced festival stages from Northwest String Summit to WinterWonderGrass and transcended traditional genre boundaries, blending virtuosic bluegrass wizardry with ecstatic rock and roll energy and adventurous psychedelia.

Thanks to recent technology upgrades at the WMPAC, the show will be streamed with high-quality audio and visual production from Jereco Studios—the same engineers that produce the sound and lights for the summer outdoor series. Several cameras have been installed in the theater, allowing for multiple angles.

Two more virtual concerts are scheduled for this summer: Bozeman bluegrass phenoms Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs on August 13 and local Grateful Dead tribute band Dead Sky on September 3. For more information please call 995-2742 or visit bigskayrts.org.

Big Sky Resort requires face masks for all

EBS STAFF

Big Sky Resort on July 11 began requiring all of its employees and guests to wear face coverings while at the resort.

According to details outlined in the resort's recent blog post, the mandate applies in all indoor public areas such as lobbies, restaurants, restrooms and all outdoor spaces where a six-foot distance cannot be achieved. This includes, but is not limited to, conference meetings, chairlift unloading and loading areas and biking when social distancing isn't possible.

The requirement applies to all Big Sky Resort staff and guests over the age of five. The resort asks visitors to follow the guidance of team members and posted signage.

New national forest plan includes myriad voices

EBS STAFF

The Custer Gallatin National Forest on July 9 released a 25-page report outlining its plans for 2020 forest management. The report addresses the forest's key role in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the role it plays in American Indian Nations including their sacred and cultural ties to the landscape, and provides direction on the integration of bison. It also highlights additional wilderness, backcountry, recreation and grazing areas. Decisions reached in the report were a joint effort with the public, stakeholders and tribal governments.

"We're pleased the Forest Service has recognized the importance of conserving the Madisons and Gallatins," said Emily Cleveland, senior field director at Montana Wilderness Association in a July 9 press release. "These places are some of the wildest areas near Bozeman and play a key role in supporting wildlife, clean water and outdoor recreation."

Possible increased forest recreation fees open to public comment

EBS STAFF

A number of recreation sites, including the Rendezvous Nordic Ski area, 14 campgrounds as well as 27 cabin and lookout rentals on Custer Gallatin National Forest lands could see increased use fees in 2021. Across the board, proposed site use fee increases range from \$3 to \$115 from their current rate, dependent on location and site. Coincidentally, fees were proposed for the first time on four Custer Gallatin National Forest campgrounds and two additional cabins.

According to a Custer Gallatin National Forest and U.S. Forest Service press release: "the new fees would support the Forest's ability to continue to maintain and improve services to Forest visitors at popular recreation sites, as well as develop fee tiers that are more consistent among sites with similar amenities, locations and capacity."

The proposal is currently in a public comment period until Aug. 23. After public comment is gathered, the comments as well as the proposed increase in use fees go to the Resource Advisory Committees. Ultimately, the regional forester has the last say in the matter.

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No vacancy

Even as COVID-19 cases rise in Gallatin County, business is booming

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – Everyone’s talking about the license plates. In parking lots and on roads throughout Big Sky, droves of cars registered to states around the country indicate an unusually usual pattern for the destination town’s summer season: tourism.

After a vertical dive in business following the COVID-19 related closure of Big Sky Resort in March, locals battened down the hatches and weathered booking cancellations, temporary business shutdowns and ghostly quiet streets. In an attempt to best manage potentially sparse resort tax funds, the Big Sky Resort Area District examined the worst potential outcomes for the community’s livelihood—tourism—through scenario planning. The fear was that there would be no tourism this summer and no substantial collections.

Now it’s July and that fear is fading as streets, stores and trails fill up once again, in the same manner as summers past. But with the pandemic’s especially aggressive resurgence in resort areas, Big Sky community members are thinking critically about how to strike the precarious balance between commerce and public health.

“We were anticipating July to be a little slower just due to the circumstances but it seems like people are just flocking to resort communities,” said Josh Treasure, general manager of Roxy’s Market in Big Sky.

Since Gov. Steve Bullock lifted Montana’s 14-day quarantine for out-of-state travelers on June 1, local business owners and managers have observed a surprising replication of past summer season trends. It’s busy in Big Sky.

Visit Big Sky, the area’s nonprofit destination marketing organization, uses a data collection program called DestiMetrics that compiles a retail report using reservations for 60 days out from eight lodging partners to compare to the past year to help inform partners on operational needs. Participating partners include Big Sky Vacation Rentals; Bucks T-4; Natural Retreats; Lone Mountain Ranch; Rainbow Ranch; Stay Montana; The Lodge at Big Sky and The Wilson Hotel.

As of June 15, collective bookings from the report forecast July occupancy to range from 32-57 percent. The comparable forecast from 2019 projected occupancy to range from 52-77 percent with actual bookings last July ranging from about 64-90 percent. While predictions would have suggested just weeks ago that Big Sky would see less traffic this summer, real-time reports say otherwise.

“We’re pacing higher this year than we were last year, which is very shocking,” said Mandy Hotovy, general manager of The Wilson Hotel in Town Center. While 2019 marked the beginning of the Marriott property’s first stub year, Hotovy said of the 3,999 rooms that can be sold across July, 90 percent will be filled, whereas last year The Wilson finished the month at around 81 percent occupancy.

Hotovy said that rooms started filling again around mid-June, in correlation, she believes, with Bullock’s revoking of travel restrictions, other states’ similar leniency and Yellowstone National Park opening its gates.

A significant amount of The Wilson’s summer business is due to families staying one to two nights before or after visiting Yellowstone, according to Hotovy. Yellowstone Public Affairs recently reported that June visitation to the park was down, but traffic picked up substantially toward the end of the month, with visitation in the last 10 days of the month ranging from 90-116 percent of 2019 figures.

“With everything going on and of course with the pandemic, I don’t know if anyone around here really knew what to expect ... because it would change week over week,” she said. Following the closure of the resort, Hotovy said that The Wilson experienced the same plummet in bookings as was ubiquitous across town. “We would have a massive amount of bookings and then all of a sudden a good chunk of cancellations.”

Adam Farr, owner of Ascend Properties in Big Sky, observed a similar trend in his property management business. “We’ve seen a significant uptick and interest in renting in Big Sky, really over the last four weeks or so,” Farr said, dating the rental spike to mid-June.

Ascend manages 145 properties in total, including second homes, vacation rentals and long-term rentals. According to Farr, properties are near full across the board, with 100 percent of second homeowners in town, approximately 90 percent of vacation rentals occupied, and no available long-term rentals.

Farr added that people aren’t just in Big Sky to vacation—many are looking to move here for the long haul. He fields multiple calls daily from people looking to move into a long-term rental.

“We’ve seen significant interest in the past, but when you have three to six people reaching out every single day, that’s pretty significant demand,” he said.

Hotovy and Farr both identified specific areas where much of the traffic is flowing in from—Salt Lake City, Seattle, Minnesota as well as Michigan, Chicago, Florida and California. And then there are road trippers from the East Coast—but, Hotovy said, at this point people are coming in from everywhere. Another trend they observed: last-minute bookings.

Farr said historically, properties are reserved two to eight months ahead of time. Now, most of Ascend’s bookings are three to six weeks in advance, a trend he attributes to uncertainty from the pandemic. The Wilson has also observed numerous short-notice reservations, Hotovy said. At Big Sky Resort, General Manager Troy Nedved noted that booking windows for lodging have been shorter than usual as guests aim to keep their travel plans flexible.

While the resort was unable to share specific occupancy statistics due to confidentiality agreements with investors, Nedved did say he’s been surprised by the visitor turnout.

“With many guests road-tripping domestically and seeking activities that are inherently socially distanced, golf, biking and Basecamp activities have seen stronger demand than initially expected,” Nedved wrote in a statement to EBS.

Treasure is also taken aback by the level of business after anticipating a slow summer. Based on transactions, Treasure said that in the first two weeks of July, Roxy’s customer count was up 300-400 people per day compared to early July of last year. He said that with the exception of a local rush in the mornings, most customers appear to be tourists.

“We’re happy to have the business and obviously it’s good from the business aspect, we just hope that they’re healthy and wearing masks and being considerate of everybody,” Treasure said. While he said he would never turn away business, Treasure pointed out that Roxy’s has taken precautionary measures to protect customers and staff by recently mandating face coverings for all staff and shoppers.

For those entering the store without a face covering, Treasure said they are directed to complimentary masks at the front of the store provided through the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce’s initiative to provide masks to local businesses that suggest or mandate their use. Treasure said that this mandate rarely causes issues and most people are compliant.

“Treasure said that in the first two weeks of July, Roxy’s customer count was up 300-400 people per day compared to early July of last year.”

In spite of local efforts, however, resort communities have joined the ranks of the country’s most populous regions in spikes in viral transmission. In early July, The New York Times podcast “The Daily” reported that initial virus data from March showed that next to urban centers like New York and Seattle, resort counties across the U.S. were also being recognized as viral transmission hotspots.

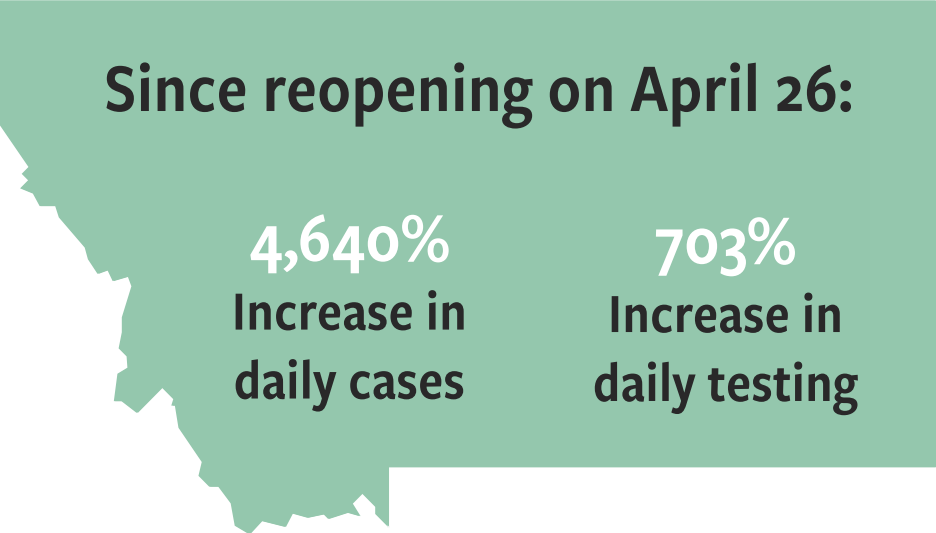
More recently, The Times data shows that, following only the South, the West is seeing one of the top resurgence spikes of COVID-19 in the country.

Since the state reopened on April 26, Montana daily case counts were up 4,640 percent, based on a seven-day average, according to Times data as of midnight on July 14, the most recent data available before EBS press time. And Montana has now seen the largest resurgence since opening by percent increase in the country. However, the state also ranks in the top five for available testing, having increased daily test counts by 703 percent, also by a seven-day average.

Big Sky, while not yet topping any charts, may be no exception.

“We have a good number of cases in Big Sky, and whenever you have a large number of people in a place where we’ve seen significant disease transmission, that’s a concern,” said Gallatin City-County Health Officer Matt Kelley. “Inviting thousands of people into our community during a pandemic does bring with it risk, and we have to understand that and accept that.”

Chaz Boutsikaris, owner of the Brothel Bikes shop, which doubles as a bar, is no stranger to this risk. In late June, one of his bartenders contracted COVID-19 after being in contact with out-of-state visitors.



“It’s been really frustrating,” Boutsikaris said. “We’ve taken all of the precautions, and then one of my employees got sick outside of work.” According to the bar owner, he spent around \$500 on sneeze guards, followed all health department guidelines, and even postponed the establishment’s opening a month beyond when he was allowed.

Immediately after learning of his employee’s diagnosis, Boutsikaris closed his bar for 2 weeks. In reflection of this experience, he said he would have rather waited longer to reopen and lost revenue than to have everything reopen when it did and enter a period of unknown risk.

“As a business owner, this is my life,” he said. “I built it from nothing. I have to make this business work. It’s in my best interest to make customers feel safe and employees feel safe.”

While Health Officer Kelley is not shy in expressing concern for the bustling community of Big Sky and its companion resort town, West Yellowstone, he said there are ways to balance the risk.

“It’s so important that everyone realizes that government can only do so much, but at the end of this, it’s going to come down to personal responsibility,” Kelley said, later confirming that “personal responsibility” extends to business owners. “If people will take personal responsibility and limit the number of interactions they have with other people, that will help us slow down this pandemic.”

Kelley listed social distancing, wearing face coverings and frequent hand washing as practices that everyone should adopt to prevent themselves and others from getting sick, even while on vacation. While the health department currently is not able to deduce how many Gallatin County cases were contracted from out-of-state visitors, Kelley did say that local cases are spread across everyone, from visitors to residents.

Business owners in Big Sky are prepared to make changes, but the interest in keeping businesses open remains strong. On Explore Big Sky’s recent Virtual Town Hall meeting, Montana Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney said “We cannot have a healthy economy if we don’t have healthy citizens.” But in Big Sky, not achieving these things simultaneously could come at a cost and threaten businesses.

“I think there is this understanding that if there is a significant surge in Big Sky than we are going to have to take a few steps back and just be prepared to do that,” Farr said. “But in the meantime, we have to just keep pushing forward, [moving] back to normal, and keep an eye on the number of active cases in the area.”

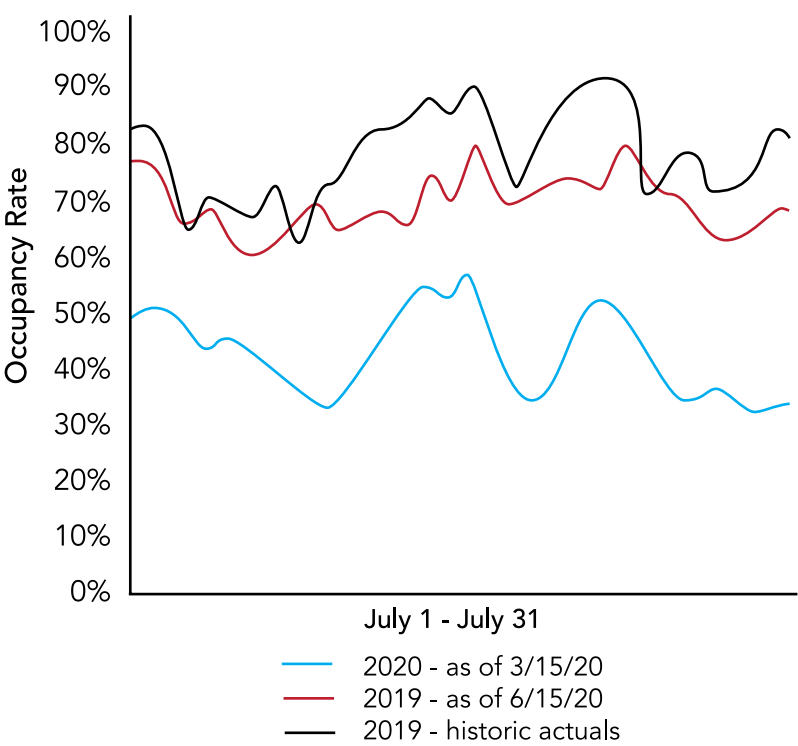
Hotovy echoed this sentiment, noting that for a seasonal economy such as Big Sky, this is the time to generate revenue and keep businesses viable for the future, especially when much is still unknown about the winter season. Farr said that visitors are still hesitant to book for the upcoming winter, given the fluid nature of the virus and travel regulation.

For now, visitors continue to arrive and businesses are buttoning up limited contact and sanitizing services with the best hopes of staying healthy and staying open. According to Montana Department of Transportation data gathered near the sewer ponds off of Montana Highway 64, two-way traffic counts from July 1-12 are down to 10,679 cars per day from last years 11,642 ; a mere 8 percent difference.

Layered over the growing concern of a viral resurgence, business in Big Sky marches forward in cautious step. “We do have to start moving back to normal for this town to survive,” Farr said.

As for what’s next, Gallatin Health Officer Matt Kelley says the county is keeping options open in order to maintain public health and keep the economy running. “We’re doing our best to prevent the situation where businesses have to close or people have to stay home in order to limit transmission,” Kelley said. But he’s keeping options open. “Everything is still on the table,” he said.

Big Sky Daily Occupacy Report as of June 15, 2020
“Retail Report”: 60-Day Advance View



*data courtesy of Visit Big Sky's Daily Occupancy Report.
Data represents occupancy on the books as of June 15, 2020



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BSSD introduces new principal

BY BRANDON WALKER

BIG SKY – When the school year begins this fall at the Big Sky School District, Dr. Marlo Mitchem, a familiar face, will step into a new role as the sixth through 12th grade principal. Mitchem will replace Alex Ide who left the district following the 2019-2020 school year.



Dr. Marlo Mitchem has worked at the Big Sky School District for the last four years. She was recently announced as the new seventh through 12th grade principal. PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. MARLO MITCHEM

Mitchem said she is very excited. “I love this community and I love working with the colleagues and the students here and so [I’m] just super excited to take on this challenge and an opportunity just to continue working with everybody here,” she said.

Mitchem has worked in the education field for 20 years, spending the last four years at BSSD as the International Baccalaureate program curriculum coordinator. She began her career in Beaverton, Oregon teaching at Southridge High School. Following her time in

Oregon, she accepted positions internationally in Bahrain, Morocco, and Dreieich, Germany, before taking the curriculum coordinator position at BSSD.

“[I]t’s kind of the everyday experiences that ... also really fill you up as an educator,” Mitchem said. “Just working with students and teachers and having a common purpose and a common goal of making our students’ lives better through education.”

As she inherits the role of sixth through 12th grade principal, Mitchem aims to further progress the “fantastic culture” she has experienced during her tenure at BSSD.

“[I’m excited] just to play a different role, but still a very important role in making sure that students are challenged and supported and that they are happy and excited about coming to school and faculty are too,” she said.

With many questions looming ahead of the school year, BSSD plans to provide an update on the plan regarding whether students will resume in-person classes or continue remote learning at the July 21 school board meeting. Mitchem cited the uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic as likely being her greatest challenge as she assumes the helm at BSSD.

“That being said, I’m really confident with the school board and with Dr. [Dustin] Shipman and the whole community, that together we will navigate this,” Mitchem said. “As long as we kind of stay positive and responsive and are listening to the new information and data that’s coming in.”

If BSSD opts to take the online learning route at the beginning of the school year, Mitchem is confident in the district’s capabilities to continue effectively teaching students remotely.

“While I know there is like a larger national debate with online learning, I think that we’ve been very fortunate,” Mitchem said. “Now it’s not as perfect as teaching right, because it’s based on a lot of relationship between the teacher and the students and being in person is never replaceable by online.”

She remains excited and optimistic for what lies ahead regardless of the setting that classes will take place in this year.

“I’m just such a lifelong learner and so to be immersed in education as a career has been wonderful because I get to continue to learn from others,” she said.



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Resort tax board considers testing plan, COVID-19 control

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – At its July 8 open board meeting, the Big Sky Resort Area District board discussed a plan for what board chair Kevin Germain identified as key efforts to controlling COVID-19: testing, tracing and face masks.

A testing, tracing and surveillance plan drafted by BSRAD staff and board members initially proposed weekly, widespread testing in Big Sky.

“The original intention is to do some regular, ongoing testing that we are hoping to get in place this summer and continue on through the ski season,” Germain said. “And the concept is to test a certain percentage of our workforce and locals every week to look for any potential COVID outbreaks.”

The plan was created in coordination with Bozeman Health System Director of Clinical Practice and Emergency Operations Manager Birgen Knoff, and seeks to implement sentinel surveillance testing. This specific testing approach, according to the World Health Organization, “deliberately involves only a limited network of carefully selected reporting sites.” The WHO says that data collected from sentinel testing can be used to signal trends, identify outbreaks and monitor the burden of disease in a community.

“It’s a much more proactive testing program than is currently going on in Big Sky and our county ... Up until the mass testing last week, it was only symptomatic individuals getting tested,” Germain said.

Through working on this plan, Germain said that a lack of clarity and commitment from the state on appropriate testing kits needed for the program as well as necessary funding resulted in a pivot. While unable to execute the full sentinel testing plan immediately, BSRAD, in partnership with Bozeman Health and the Gallatin City-County and Madison County health departments, organized one day of free mass surveillance testing for anyone who wanted it in Big Sky on July 1. Nearly 700 people were tested, and results are not yet available.

According to Germain, efforts to implement the sentinel testing program will continue. Having identified that the resource backup is rooted at the state level, BSRAD drafted a letter to Montana’s Congressional delegation requesting support in procuring more testing supplies. These included Panther testing kits, which are compatible with the analyzer located in Bozeman, and Cepheid testing kits, which are compatible with the analyzer located in Big Sky.

The hope is that additional resources acquired by the state will trickle down to Gallatin County and Big Sky, allowing for localized test analysis with quicker turnaround times. Results from mass testing like that which occurred in Big Sky on July 1 were said to be

turned around in three to five days according to the state lab, but as of EBS press time on July 15, results had yet to be released. By processing the tests using local analyzers, the wait time could be only a few days.

The letter also requests assistance in attaining ventilators purchased in April by Big Sky Relief for the Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center. The letter references Big Sky’s significant economic contribution to the state of Montana, thanks to its tourist economy, and suggests that better testing control will support a healthier winter season, which will in turn fuel lodging tax revenue for all of Montana.

Bozeman Health is still fine tuning the sentinel testing plan, answering questions like what percent of the local workforce should be tested and how frequently. BSRAD Executive Director Daniel Bierschwale said that the increased testing ability would benefit all of southwest Montana and contact tracers, adding that the testing plan could be used as a template for other resort communities in the state.

The letter was signed by representatives from BSRAD; local health departments; Bozeman Health; the Big Sky Fire Department; Big Sky Resort; the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce; the Big Sky Community Organization; Yellowstone and Spanish Peaks Mountain clubs; and Moonlight Basin.

As for tracing, Germain said that in late June, when a cluster of COVID-19 cases was traced back to a local bartender and social activity, Kelley contacted the Gallatin County Sheriff to enlist help in monitoring Big Sky bars. Sgt. Brandon Kelly in Big Sky said this entails informal observations of local bars, where officers focus on ensuring that Gov. Bullock’s Phase 2 requirements are being met. Kelly added that there is no enforcement piece on their part.

Big Sky Relief also supported a Big Sky Chamber of Commerce and Visit Big Sky effort to procure 50,000 face masks, sourced by Roxy’s Market, to distribute to local businesses willing to mandate or strongly suggest the use of face coverings. This initiative came just before Gov. Bullock issued a state-wide mask mandate.

Bierschwale shared other Big Sky Relief updates with the board, including a crude current balance estimation of BSRAD dollars left in the fund, which is likely hovering above \$200,000. BSRAD recently submitted a reimbursement request through state CARES Act programs for \$634,000 that the district spent on COVID-19 relief services. The board has not yet received a response.

The board also discussed the possibility of purchasing one of the two units that BSRAD currently occupies in the RJS Tower in Town Center. Board members cited acquiring a valuable asset and potential savings as reasons to purchase the space, but due to some missing information, the board postponed the conversation until actual savings could be calculated.



Gov. Steve Bullock issues statewide mask mandate

BY MIRA BRODY

HELENA – Effective immediately following his announcement, Gov. Steve Bullock issued a mandatory statewide mask requirement for all counties who currently have four or more active cases of COVID-19. This directive applies to certain indoor spaces and certain organized outdoor activities with 50 or more people in attendance where social distancing is not possible.

Exceptions include strenuous physical activity, eating food or drink, for hearing impaired Montanans or for people who have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a mask. They don’t need to be worn in private residences. Another exception is cultural or theatrical performances when the performer is a safe distance away from their audience.

Community spread has been reported in nine counties and in the past week, Yellowstone and Gallatin counties have accounted for 60 percent of the new cases in Montana. Gov. Bullock cited the devastating outbreak at Canyon Creek Memory Care Community, which yielded 90 cases and eight deaths. In the last month active cases in the state went from 55 to over 1,000. Montana has doubled the number of total cases since the start of July.

He said a mask mandate is intended to limit the spread of COVID-19 and that controlling the virus will allow for businesses to stay open, schools to operate and prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed.

“Many Montanans answered the call to mask up—a call that came from our hospitals, nurses and doctors, our vibrant small business community,

our frontline workers and our high-risk neighbors,” Gov. Bullock said. “I thank all of those who take seriously their personal responsibility and their role in stopping COVID-19. But we need even more Montanans, and the visitors who come here, to mask up.”

Gov. Bullock said this mask requirement is based off of similar ones mandated in other states. Face coverings will be available to all employees and volunteers and business entryways will have signage about face requirements for ages five and older.

“There’s no reason this needs to be political, because COVID-19 isn’t political. Instead, this is about being a Montanan and being supportive of those around us,” Gov. Bullock said. “An individual might think that they have a constitutional right to get themselves sick if they so choose,” Bullock said. “But they don’t have a constitutional right to get other people sick.”

Gov. Bullock also announced a COVID-19 relief fund that will distribute \$75 million to Montana schools to help them safely prepare for the upcoming school year.

He said public health agencies and law enforcement should focus their enforcement on education providing warnings about the risk of transmission, and reserving citations and penalties for only repeat violations that put the public at risk.

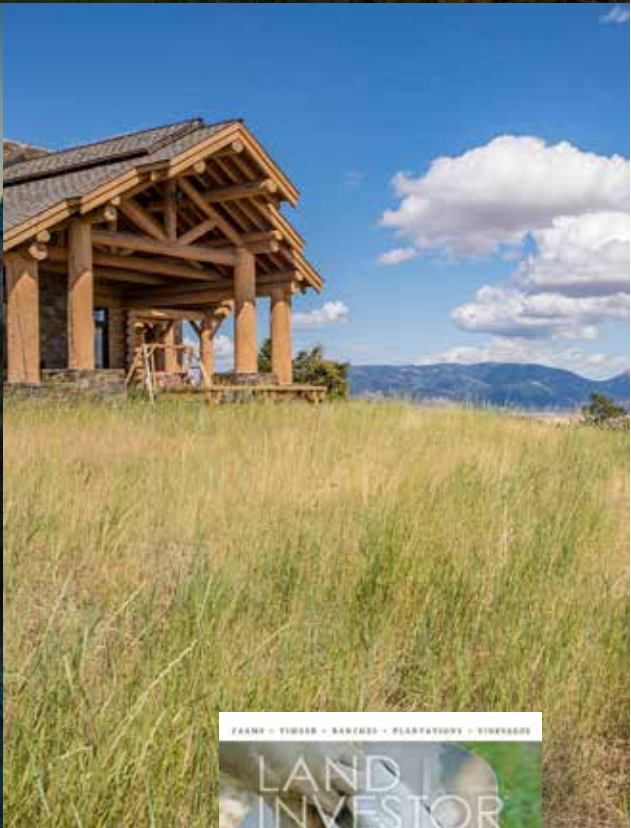
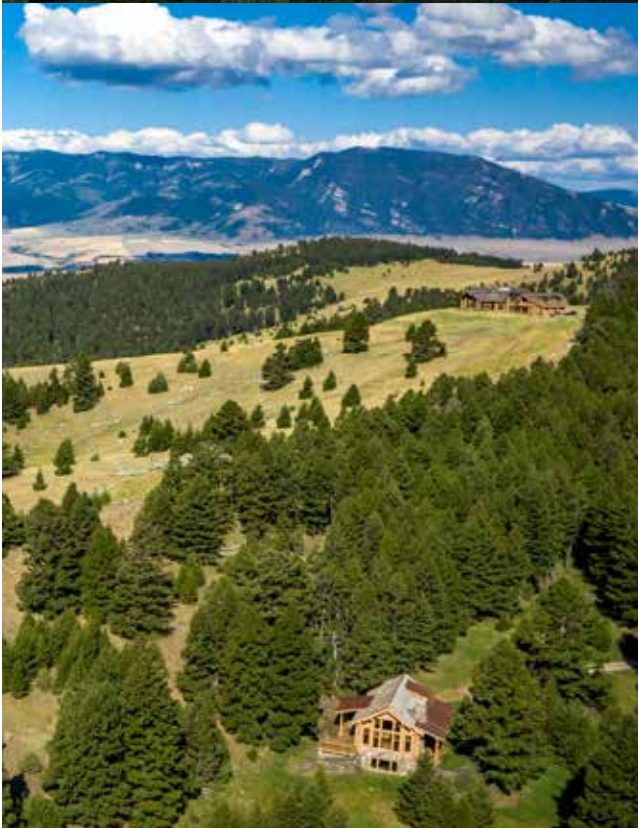
The directive goes went effect immediately and expires at the end of the declared statewide state of emergency.



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OUTLAW™

News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners

EBS news team reflects on pandemic experience, bolsters digital effort

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – The date was March 15. Explore Big Sky Editor-in-Chief Joe O’Connor and Local Editor Brandon Walker sat at a table tucked in the back of the empty Outlaw Partners office pondering next steps as southwest Montana entered the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a precautionary measure, Outlaw Partners, publisher of EBS, limited employees in the office and took extra precautions for the editorial staff to conduct interviews virtually as needed. On March 15, one particular shutdown notice rocked the Big Sky community: Big Sky Resort announced that it would suspend ski operations for the remainder of the season, more than a month ahead of schedule.

It was then, huddled at the table, that the game plan changed for the EBS editorial team. Reversing the traditional model that the paper had followed for years, the staff flipped the script and began publishing news online as it broke, disseminating information to the community as fast we could churn it out.

“I can tell you, myself and my team, we’re going out and we’re busting our tails every day to tell you the truth [and] to bring readers information they need,” O’Connor said. “We decided we weren’t going to put our heads in the sand, and instead adjusted our approach to the quickening news cycle.”

Much has taken place over the course of the past four months. The EBS team has worked relentlessly to cover the progression of the virus within Gallatin County while still bringing readers additional pertinent news. Now, we want to take an opportunity to tell you our story.

“My thoughts and feelings on COVID-19 haven’t changed much since it got here in March,” said EBS New Media Lead Mira Brody. “We’re living through something no one really has before and information changes every day. That forces you to be nimble and accepting and patient. So, I’ve been trying to embrace those life skills.”

We’ve worked from home. We’ve grown accustomed to Zoom meetings. And we’ve had to navigate the pandemic just like you, our readers.

“Each night when I leave the office, I pass by O’Connor’s desk, always with the intention of simply saying goodnight. But each time it turns into

a conversation; a decompression of yet another wild day of news,” said EBS Community and Environmental Editor Bella Butler. “These evening conversations, and others like them, serve as a grounding mechanism. Every news release, press conference and interview is crazier than the last, and it’s hard not to get stuck up in the clouds.”

Since March 15, the EBS team has uploaded more than 330 original and externally sourced articles containing information that references or is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, while attempting to process and formulate our own thoughts of the virus and best practices to take throughout the pandemic.

“I have never dealt with anything like this in my life, whether it be on a personal or professional level,” Walker said. “It has been a constant challenge to disseminate my own evolving thoughts and feelings as I’ve consumed a wealth of information on the virus. Conveying the most up to date and accurate information has been paramount for our team throughout the last four months.”

And the effort has manifested itself in a digital surge. During a 30-day period spanning from late May into the final week of June, EBS tracked more than 300,000 pageviews on explorebigsky.com, roughly double the current average amount for the previous 30-day period. In addition, the number of subscribers to the EBS Town Crier e-newsletter increased from roughly 8,000 subscribers in February to about 16,000 by mid-March.

“I think that’s a testament to the quality work we’re doing, but also the amount and regularity of the stories that we’re getting out there,” O’Connor said.

Coinciding with the bolstered page views, the number of articles published per day in the month of July has increased, averaging more than four articles uploaded to the explorebigsky.com website each day.

“When a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic touches every corner of the globe, big media outlets are essential in creating an understanding of the larger narrative,” Butler said. “But our audience also exists within another narrative, one that is locally driven and relatable to people as they move through their day-to-day lives in the Big Sky area.”

In our attempt to continue keeping our readers better informed, EBS has exciting news. While we continue to print the EBS newspaper, we’re bolstering our online presence, adding web-specific content as well as more stories, photos, videos and audio recordings to explorebigsky.com.

“EBS’s digital presence will make local, independent news available to our community in a timely manner. That’s something that is so unique in our country and I hope no one takes for granted,” Brody said. “It will also allow us to grow so we can better serve Big Sky for the long-haul.”

As we increase this digital effort, we’ll be rolling out reader perks and providing our audience with more opportunities to become further involved with EBS, Mountain Outlaw magazine and our digital platforms.

“We’re all in this together,” Walker said. “The EBS team’s goal is to bring you the information that you want to read. We encourage our readers to submit story ideas and we’ll do our best to report on the topics that interest you.”

Check out explorebigsky.com for daily content and to sign up for the popular Town Crier e-newsletter, and visit our Facebook and Instagram pages for more breaking news.



The EBS team works to finish the final edits on the latest edition of Explore Big Sky. PHOTO BY ME BROWN

OUTLAW™

News from our publisher, Outlaw Partners

Big Sky Town Hall panelists talk agility, vigilance

EBS STAFF

BIG SKY – In the 10th installment of Big Sky Virtual Town Hall, panelists spoke of the statewide spike in COVID-19 cases, masks and the importance of vigilance and agility in uncertain times.

Mike Cooney, Lt. Gov. of Montana, announced assuredly that he had a mask ready in his pocket. He spoke to the importance of Montanans realizing that the virus is still here and serious. Cooney has been meeting with Montana superintendents, school nurses, educators and members of various school districts to discuss a safe approach to reopening education this fall. He noted that every school district is going to have their own unique challenges.

"Our goal is always to get to Phase 3 as soon as possible, but we're going to do it the right way," said Cooney. "It's going to have to be up to us."

Matt Kelley, Health Officer for the Gallatin City-County Health Department explained the two types of testing currently available, the effectiveness of masks and gloves and the most concerning aspect of COVID-19 so far—how differently it affects people. He also spoke of a mask ordinance, something many other counties around the country have implemented, and one that the Gallatin County Health Board is considering.

“Unfortunately they’ve become this polarizing partisan political issue, regrettably,” Kelley said. “While they could be a part of the puzzle, they’re not a panacea. Wearing a mask doesn’t give you a force field that protects you from COVID.”

Kelley said while most cases back in March and April were people in their 40s and 50s, now they are seeing a spike in cases of people in the 20s, and with a lot more contacts, which makes the job of the health department—to track all of those known contacts down—much more challenging. He explained that the cases in Big Sky are not in one single setting, but multiple; healthcare, construction, both residents and visitors, as well as bars and restaurants.

Right now, in Gallatin County, there are two types of testing available, rapid testing for those who are symptomatic or have been in contact with a positive case, and surveillance testing, which took place in Big Sky just last week. The turnaround time for surveillance testing is longer—somewhere between four to seven days, and it is yet unclear what insight that data provides.

David Quammen, renowned science writer and journalist, who predicted the arrival of an illness similar to COVID-19, called it the “nightmare virus.” He said COVID-19 is particularly scary because it is so nefarious—some patients get a little sick, some get very sick, some die after many months, and so many show no symptoms at all. He says because of this, it will survive in our society for a very long time.

Quammen is taking quarantine very seriously. He and his wife have been isolated since March, and wear masks on the rare occasion that they leave the house. They stay in touch with loved ones, even those in town, through Skype or from a six-foot distance.

"I respect these dangerous viruses. I spent five years studying these crazy lethal viruses with scientists who do research them," said Quammen. "I'm worried for humanity. I'm worried for the people in the U.S. who are being disproportionately hit by this. I think that is crazy and unacceptable."

Matt Kidd, Managing Director of CrossHarbor Capital Partners, finished out the 10th Town Hall series, talking about the Fourth of July fireworks show and development in Big Sky, including the purchase of Buck's T-4 Lodge, which reopened this past weekend. He said while they have not encouraged visitation, people recognize that Big Sky is a very desirable place to be and a great place to enjoy while social distancing.

Kidd says CrossHarbor has been busy, as they make headway on the Powder Light project, which will provide 340 beds for Big Sky's workforce. He also touched on the role of masks at the Yellowstone Club, Spanish Peaks, Moonlight and CrossHarbor job sites.

“People should look at wearing a mask not as a political statement, but as the simplest act of kindness that one can share with other human beings,” said Kidd.

Big Sky Art Auction returns July 18-19

The fifth annual Big Sky Art Auction brings a new and expanded format where bidders can experience the auction virtually or in person in Big Sky. This year's event will feature a collection of more than 100 items and more than \$800,000 in fine art, furniture and jewelry supporting 90-plus local and regional artists, businesses and nonprofits.

An auction preview event will take place on Saturday, July 18 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will allow guests to peruse auction items and interact with select artists.

The live auction will occur on Sunday, July 19 from 2-6 p.m. Furniture and fine art pieces will be on display under the big tent in the Wilson Hotel plaza. Sponsors include Outlaw Events, Magledy Construction, Old Main Gallery and Framing, Lisa Gleim Fine art, and Jackson Hole Jewelry Co. Visit bigskyartauction.com for additional details.

Here are just a few of the items you can bid on this weekend.



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SECTION 2:
ENVIRONMENT &
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ENTERTAINMENT



New sustainability organization pg. 18



The new west pg. 22



Journey through a pandemic pg. 29

Lake trout suppression program churns on despite pandemic

BY BRANDON WALKER

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK – Even a global pandemic couldn’t derail a battle that has raged for 25 years underwater within Yellowstone National Park. Since 1995 National Park Service crews and contracted commercial fishing boats have harvested more than 3.35 million non-native lake trout from Yellowstone Lake through gillnetting efforts in an attempt to eradicate the invasive species that threaten the native cutthroat trout.



National Park Service employees working a gillnet in an attempt to catch non-native lake trout on Yellowstone Lake. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Since the first lake trout appeared in Yellowstone Lake, caught by an angler in July of 1994, extensive NPS efforts have slowly decreased their numbers within the lake, but according to head of the Native Fish Conservation Program Dr. Todd Koel, the fight is far from over.

Lake trout thrive in Yellowstone Lake mainly because they have no natural predators. “They have great survival [rates] because there is nothing coming along to eat them,” Koel said. “...They’ve got all these advantages that we’re trying to change.”

To date, over \$20 million has been spent trying to eliminate the lake trout and restore the cutthroat trout in Yellowstone Lake, according to a Yellowstone National Park press release. Funding for all aspects of the program comes from NPS, Yellowstone’s nonprofit partner Yellowstone Forever and Wyoming Trout Unlimited among others, according to Koel.

Koel has been involved with the project for 20 seasons. He said that COVID-19 has presented challenges in the form of limited staffing, as all NPS employees are living



Crews set a gillnet on Yellowstone Lake while trying to catch lake trout as part of the Native Fish Conservation Program. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

individually this season—in some instances a single employee is occupying a residence that would normally host eight—but it hasn’t caused a large disruption to the lake trout suppression efforts.

“I’m not going to say it didn’t have any impact at all,” he said. “But in terms of lake trout suppression and cutthroat recovery on Yellowstone Lake, we’re pretty much considering we’re going full bore.”

Typically, six gillnetting boats are in operation during the gillnetting season spanning months throughout the spring, summer and fall, on Yellowstone Lake harvesting the non-native, predatory lake trout. However, this year there are only enough staff for five.

NPS usually staffs two of the six boats, with the other four operated by Wisconsin commercial fishing contractor Hickey Brothers Research—who have been contracted to assist the program since 2009—but due to the reduction in employees

NPS can only field a crew to operate one vessel. Koel isn’t concerned there’s one less boat on the water, as harvest numbers in recent years have been trending down as the population is reduced.

“If the catch rates continue to go down like they have been each year then the nets are [easier] to process and you can set and retrieve more,” he said.

As of June 21, 91,300 lake trout have been netted in 2020. Koel said it appears the total catch will continue to trend down as it has been in years past. Once netted, lake trout are culled and sunk into the depths of Yellowstone Lake to decompose.

“It keeps the nutrients of the lake trout in the lake. To what extent it effects the ecology of the lake, that’s what we’re actually investigating right now with our students,” Koel said.

Koel said NPS considered attempting to sell the harvested fish, but because of the duration that the gillnets are deployed many of the fish cannot be consumed and the act of processing the ones that could be would occupy lengthy periods of time—Koel noted that Hickey Brothers Research said that processing fish could take up to 50 percent of their contracted time.

“That would mean we would have to double the fleet and the crews to kill as many lake trout,” he said.

Aiding the smaller fleet, which will be forced to conclude their gillnetting efforts in October by ice, are new scientific tactics in the form of a pellet that is strategically placed at lake trout spawning sites. The soy and wheat gluten pellets, similar in size to that of lake trout eggs, were developed to remove dissolved oxygen from the water, killing the eggs in the process. Koel said no ecological repercussions from the pellets have been observed to this point.

“We’ve tried it at different, I guess you’d say biomass densities, or different amounts of the pellets to try to find this sweet spot that we can apply the minimal amount and still kill all of the eggs and we’ve done that and it’s working so good,” he said.

NPS utilized a helicopter this past year to spread the pellets over spawn locations. At the Carrington Island spawning site, one of 14 NPS identified lake trout spawning sites within Yellowstone Lake, Koel said the pellets effectively killed all of the eggs. Koel also noted that NPS plans to move ahead with another treatment of the soy and wheat gluten pellets this fall during the lake trout spawning season, roughly mid-September to mid-October.

The pellets are the latest attempt by NPS to eliminate lake trout spawns. Prior to the pellets, part of the lake trout spawning elimination strategy was to introduce decaying lake trout carcasses. The decomposing carcasses have the same effect as the pellets: removing dissolved oxygen from the water.

“In the end the lake trout suppression project, and the cutthroat trout recovery as a result of that, in Yellowstone Lake, is first and foremost the top priority,” Koel said in reference to how funds are allocated for various NPS projects. “...Anything else we do outside of Yellowstone Lake, comes after that.”

While he admits that cutthroat trout numbers haven’t yet reached satisfactory levels established by NPS, he is encouraged by the health of fish that he has seen.

“A cutthroat trout that’s 20 inches long now weighs twice as much as it did prior to the lake trout invasion and the impact of lake trout. So, the fish that are surviving out there are doing better,” he said.



Crew members display a lake trout harvested from gillnetting on Yellowstone Lake. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

New sustainability organization steps into light

Big Sky SNO to make Big Sky greener, more valuable

BY BELLA BUTLER

BIG SKY – While the uniquely raw landscapes around Big Sky are what have compelled many to call the area home and countless others to visit the destination mountain town time and again, the immaculate beauty promises no permanence, at least not without some behavioral changes by its human occupants.

This is a reality that gathered locals Marne Hayes and Ania Bulis, among others, in conversation about the future of sustainability in Big Sky. Hayes, who owns a consulting business and serves as the director of Businesses for Montana’s Outdoors, was contracted to engage in a series of community conversations in the summer of 2019 to gauge interest, a baseline and community priorities around sustainability.

Hayes’ conversations and other interactions among community members on the topic sparked a collective interest in founding a more coordinated effort to tackle green initiatives in Big Sky. A year later, the Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization is a pending 501(c)(3) with initiatives already underway.

“Where we live is this beautiful, pristine, sought after community, both for the people that live here and for the people that visit here, and I think, for me personally, there comes a time where you have to follow through on the things that you need to take care of your community,” Hayes said. “If I’m being honest, I think Big Sky is a little bit behind the eight ball on sustainable practices.”

Hayes said that when juxtaposed with comparable communities, Big Sky has some catching up to do when it comes to sustainability—Vail, Colorado was first Certified Sustainable Destination in the nation to have successfully met the Global Sustainable Tourism Council’s criteria, and Jackson Hole is one of only six communities in the Rocky Mountain region to have passed a zero waste resolution.

However, many of these other communities have an advantage that Big Sky doesn’t: incorporation.

“When you’re not incorporated, when you don’t have a government, getting everyone to adopt...is a challenge,” said Bulis, who is one of seven members on SNO’s steering committee. SNO has been challenged with creating initiatives that foster interest and participation from businesses and community members without mandates. According to Hayes and Bulis, Big Sky has expressed readiness for adopting sustainable priorities.

One of their first projects, obtaining recycling and composting vessels and services for the Town Center area and the Big Sky Community Park, received funding from the Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Moonlight Community Foundation and resort tax as well as support from Republic Services. Pending the approval of an outstanding grant from the Spanish Peaks Community Foundation, the project will have received money from all entities that SNO applied to.

“...I think sort of the willingness of all of those people to invest shows that the community is really hungry for these kinds of initiatives. I think it’s such a great win for us...” Hayes said.

In its early stages, SNO is focused on generating awareness and cooperation, so while larger, long-term projects are in the works, Bulis said that the organization is most immediately looking to small changes that can have an impact now.



Roxy’s Market, which has recently been leaning into green initiatives, started selling aluminum water bottles in an attempt to limit plastic consumption. Roxy’s General Manager, Josh Treasure, is a member of the Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization’s steering committee. PHOTO BY JOSH TREASURE



Through the help of a number of funding and support partners, SNO has ordered recycling and compost bins, similar to the above example to be placed in Town Center and the Big Sky Community Park. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG SKY SNO

“...[S]ustainability in general is just such a big apple to take a bite out of, right, and so when Marne and I started talking and then Josh [Treasure] and I started talking, I was like ‘What is some low hanging fruit that we can actually act on and create actionable items around?’”

Another project the new organization has implemented is the installation of water-filling stations in Fire Pit Park in Town Center and at the community park. These amenities encourage the use of reusable water bottles and limit plastics. The two stations will be finished by the end of July.

In addition to the steering committee, SNO has a larger working committee of around 20 people. Various subcommittees exist to tackle the many facets of sustainability as they exist in the Big Sky community. One subcommittee is devoted to working alongside the area’s larger entities like Big Sky Resort to implement institutional changes that have the potential to make significant progress due to the business’ scale. Another subcommittee is working toward a greenhouse gas emission calculation and addressing climate-related sustainability issues.

One of the underlying motivations behind the conception of SNO is the possibility of getting Big Sky certified through the Mountain IDEAL program, a designation created through the Walking Mountains Science Center for mountain resort communities. According to the science center, the certification “provides a framework of sustainable tourism criteria and performance indicators that support any mountain destination in elevating its sustainability performance, stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and recognition as a global leader.”

According to Hayes, the certification process is a lengthy, multi-year endeavor, one that would likely be achieved officially through the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce and Visit Big Sky, but the existence of SNO and the budding sustainability experts on the committee would be of great benefit in this effort.

The nature of a resort community also dictates the inclusion of tourists in order to achieve true widespread participation. Hayes said SNO is working to weave in the visitor education component as well, by considering options like including reusable water bottles and grocery bags in hotel rooms and rental properties, or creating a marketing page with directions on how to participate in local sustainability.

Bulis, who is a founding broker with Big Sky Real Estate Co., believes that ramping up sustainability efforts will also add value to the area for the growing 30-some-year-old demographic of real estate buyers.

“We all recognize the importance of it living here, but I’m starting to see it as really critical for people who want to live here,” Bulis observed, adding that things like the amount of plastics and the lack of recycling options is not lost on prospective buyers. “People are going to be making decisions on how sustainably a community is run.” Bulis said for many people, it’s not an option, it’s a must.

Bulis said that she agrees with Hayes that Big Sky is behind the curve with regard to sustainability, but she doesn’t feel deterred from finding programming and projects that work for the community.

“I think that the community is pretty hungry for an initiative that takes these things and takes them on and takes them to the next level,” Hayes said.

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Landmark land swap would expand YC skiing, connect land in Crazies, add public access in Madison range

Proposal enters public comment period

BY BRANDON WALKER

The Yellowstone Club, U.S. Forest Service and stakeholders in the Crazy Mountains northwest of Big Timber have been looking at possible land swaps for the last 12 months, according to a Crazy Mountain Access Project press release press release. Yesterday the planning came to fruition. The Yellowstone Club officially announced a final plan July 9, and the public has 30 days to provide comment.

The “East Crazy Mountains and Inspiration Divide Public Access Improvement Land Exchange” aims to provide expanded public access on land within the Crazy Mountains and the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

The Yellowstone Club would hand the Forest Service 558 acres near the Lee Metcalf Wilderness in exchange for 500 acres in the Madison Range adjacent to the club to expand skiing operations east of Cedar Mountain.

In a third part of the deal, 5,205 privately owned acres within the Crazy Mountains would be allocated to the Forest Service, effectively creating a contiguous, roughly 30-mile block of public land that is currently an intermittent mix of public and private

parcels. The private landowners would be granted more than 3,600 acres on the border of the aforementioned public land in return.

“I think this exchange represents a really incredible effort from a lot of different stakeholders that have come together [and] recognized this is a problem,” said Deputy Director for the Park County Environmental Council Erica Lighthiser of the access issues to public land within the Crazy Mountains.

The Yellowstone Club plans to utilize the acquired land for skiing and riding but would come with an accompanying conservation easement allowing for: “ski uses only including avalanche control, with no subdivision, residential or non-ski development permitted,” according to the press release.

Additionally, the Yellowstone Club will pay for the construction of a 22-mile, \$1 million hiking trail in the Crazy Mountains, through the newly created chunk of public land, according to Lighthiser. She said the trail would complete a 40-mile loop within the Crazies and connect to existing trails.

“As a Montana native and a lifelong sportsman, it’s been a real privilege to work on this larger community effort to increase quality public access to land and habitat,” said Yellowstone Club’s vice president of development Mike DuCuennois. “Currently, two miles of the Inspiration Divide Trail go through property held by the Yellowstone Club and this agreement would mean the trail would instead be on public land and directly connected to the Gallatin National Forest lands. Overall, the public would gain a net increase in quality, midlevel land in the Madison Range, as well as increased access to wildlife habitat.”

As of July 9, the proposed agreement has entered a 30-day public comment period, concluding on August 7, with open-houses for public comment slated for Livingston on July 16, Big Timber on July 23, Bozeman on July 30 and Big Sky on Aug. 6.

Per the press release, at the conclusion of the public comment period on Aug. 7, the proposal will be presented to representatives of the Custer Gallatin National Forest as well as Montana’s Congressional Delegation.



A portion of the land that the Yellowstone Club would provide to the U.S. Forest Service near the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE CLUB

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THE NEW WEST

En plein air
The legacy of painter Thomas Moran



BY TODD WILKINSON
EBS ENVIRONMENTAL COLUMNIST

The National Park Service once dubbed Thomas Moran the “father of Yellowstone,” but he has never stood accused of having a charismatic way with words.

In 1871, during his visit to the Yellowstone as a member of the Hayden Expedition, the legendary Romantic painter scratched these underwhelming entries into his journal over the course of five summer days. Few would mistake them for inspired postcard prose.

- July 27, 1871: “Left Tower Falls. Halted at noon on Mt. Washburne [sic]. Arrived at Yellowstone falls in the evening.”
- July 28: “Sketching & photographing about the Falls.”
- July 29: “photographing & sketching around the Falls & Canon [sic].”
- July 30: “still at the Falls.”
- July 31: “Left the falls reached crater Hill. large Sulphur spring & many mud springs left at noon & camped at the mud volcano.”

As spare notations, these entries offer us little hint of the aesthetic supernova burning in Moran’s mind on these same days as he scrambled precariously into the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone with photographer William Henry Jackson at his side.

Nor do they provide justice to Moran’s effusive response to geography that inspired, arguably, his greatest series of masterworks.

Nor do they foretell the impact his quick-brush watercolor sketches, and later easel paintings would have in convincing U.S. Congress to chart a revolutionary course for conservation in America—preventing a landscape from being overrun by the kind of development being promoted as part of “Manifest Destiny.”

If you go to the Albright Visitor Center at Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone’s official headquarters, it’s well worth the few minutes to look at some of the artifacts from Moran’s and Jackson’s visual chronicles of Yellowstone just prior to the park’s official birth in 1872.

Several Moran paintings, in fact, are part of the historical archives of both Yellowstone and Grand Teton parks. You can also find Morans at the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. (including the original panoramic that awed members of Congress) and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Moran’s pieces that grew out of his trip to the park were more fidel to landscape and filled with less artistic embellishment than the etchings, created sight unseen and based

upon Nathaniel Landford’s descriptions of the park interior published in Scribner’s magazine.

Still, all of Moran’s portrayals convey an almost fairy tale quality.

“We pass with rapid transition from one remarkable vision to another, each unique of its kind and surpassing all others in the known world,” Hayden wrote. “The intelligent American will one day point on the map to this remarkable district with the conscious pride that it has not its parallel on the face of the globe. Why will not Congress at once pass a law setting it apart as a great public park for all time to come, as has been done with that not more remarkable wonder, the Yosemite Valley?”

Of all the works, it was the various portrayals of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and its focal point, the Lower Falls, that inspired action. Upon Moran’s return to the East Coast, he gathered the watercolors and pencil drawings around him and went to work on a mural-sized oil, 7 feet high and 12 feet across, that speaks to the heroic challenge he embraced.

Taking two months to complete, it left those who were treated to sneak previews stunned while it came together. After the piece was shown before members of Congress, Hayden dropped a note in the mail to Moran from Montana, according to Park Service historians. Hayden stated, “There is no doubt that your reputation is made.”

Of course we cannot and should not ignore the truth that the lands, which today encompass Yellowstone, were homelands, hunting grounds and travel corridors for a number of indigenous Nations. The creation of the park caused a long period of detachment for which reconnection is in order.

“Besides the geysers and wildlife and other natural wonders that Yellowstone is known for, few realize that in our vaults [in Yellowstone] is a body of original Moran paintings and personal effects more substantial than the Morans displayed at the Thomas Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which is recognized internationally for its Moran collection,” retired Yellowstone historian Lee Whittlesey once told me in a conversation.

What’s exciting about some of the less-viewed Moran gems, plained plein air, is that they reflect his artistic inspiration that happened in the moment. Adam Duncan Harris, senior curator at the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, which once hosted a notable exhibition of Morans, says art played a powerful role in the foundation of preserving nature for its own sake.

“It is exhilarating that, as art, these Morans help to tell the story of history and their pivotal role in germinating the seeds of an idea that has spread around the world,” Harris said.

Todd Wilkinson is the founder of Bozeman-based Mountain Journal and is a correspondent for National Geographic. He’s also the author of the book “Grizzlies of Pilgrim Creek,” about famous Jackson Hole grizzly bear 399.



Thomas Moran’s 1872 depiction of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, which helped convince Congress to set aside its lands as the world’s first national park, hangs today in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Gallery. Other versions that Moran created also are part of prominent collections. IMAGE COURTESY OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



Buggin’ Out

BY DAVID TUCKER
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Walk into any fly shop and you’re likely to be overwhelmed with options. Nowhere does this ring truer than at the fly display cases. There are thousands of choices to make, and what you decide will be the difference between an epic day on the water and striking out yet again.

On the Gallatin, to match the hatch (pick the right fly for where and when you’re fishing), you don’t need to worry yourself with the entire selection. Most of the upper river can be fished successfully with a few flies.

While several major hatches are common, fishing with caddis, when fish are eating hoppers, might not lead to success. Not only do you have to select flies that hatch on our river, but you also have to pay attention to time of year, weather on a given day, cloud cover, sunshine and water temperature. Is it early morning or mid-day? Did it rain last night? All these factors influence the timing of hatches and when fish might be feeding on a given bug.

Now that the river is running clear, dry-fly season is upon us. Dry flies drift on the surface and entice fish to feed where you can see them. In July, classic dry-fly patterns like Chubby Chernobyls, Royal Wulffs and Parachute Adams are all effective. Try different colors and sizes until something clicks.

While paying attention to the hatch could make or break your day on the water, what bugs are out there and in what numbers could also tell us important information about changing land-use patterns, and how that land use is impacting water quality.

“Urbanization has known effects on invertebrate populations,” says Sean Sullivan, an aquatic ecologist with the environmental consulting firm Rhithron

Associates in Missoula. “We see loss of riparian habitat and an increase in sediment loads.” As Sullivan notes, this shift in habitat can cause some invertebrates to move on, and new species fill the void.

For now, we don’t know what these changes portend. “We don’t have the data,” says Sullivan. This is where anglers come in. “Citizen science will be important. Anglers have to become active observers of what’s out there,” he continues. “So far, we don’t have a canary in the coal mine, but speaking generally, there is more of a holistic shift in the invertebrate community.”

While it might not be possible to make specific conclusions about how urbanization is playing out in Upper Gallatin Watershed regarding specific bug populations, we do know that shifts in invertebrates lead to shifts in fish and fish behavior. “Trout species are drift feeders. If we don’t have the same numbers of biomass drifting, trout will move,” Sullivan said.

Again, this scenario is shown through data gathered elsewhere, and comparing one watershed to another has its limitations. We do know that as land in Big Sky continues to be developed, we should expect changes in wildlife behavior, from charismatic megafauna like grizzlies to tiny insects like caddis. These changes will have ripple effects that spread throughout the watershed, from the high alpine to the river’s bottom. “Anglers can contribute by recording information,” says Sullivan. “Who’s hatching, specifically? What species of mayfly and when?”

As it seems, matching the hatch has more benefits than just landing a big rainbow. If we’re spending all summer on the river, our observations about insect behavior can catch us fish, but they can also help plan for a more sustainable community, a community focused on water quality and fisheries health.

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

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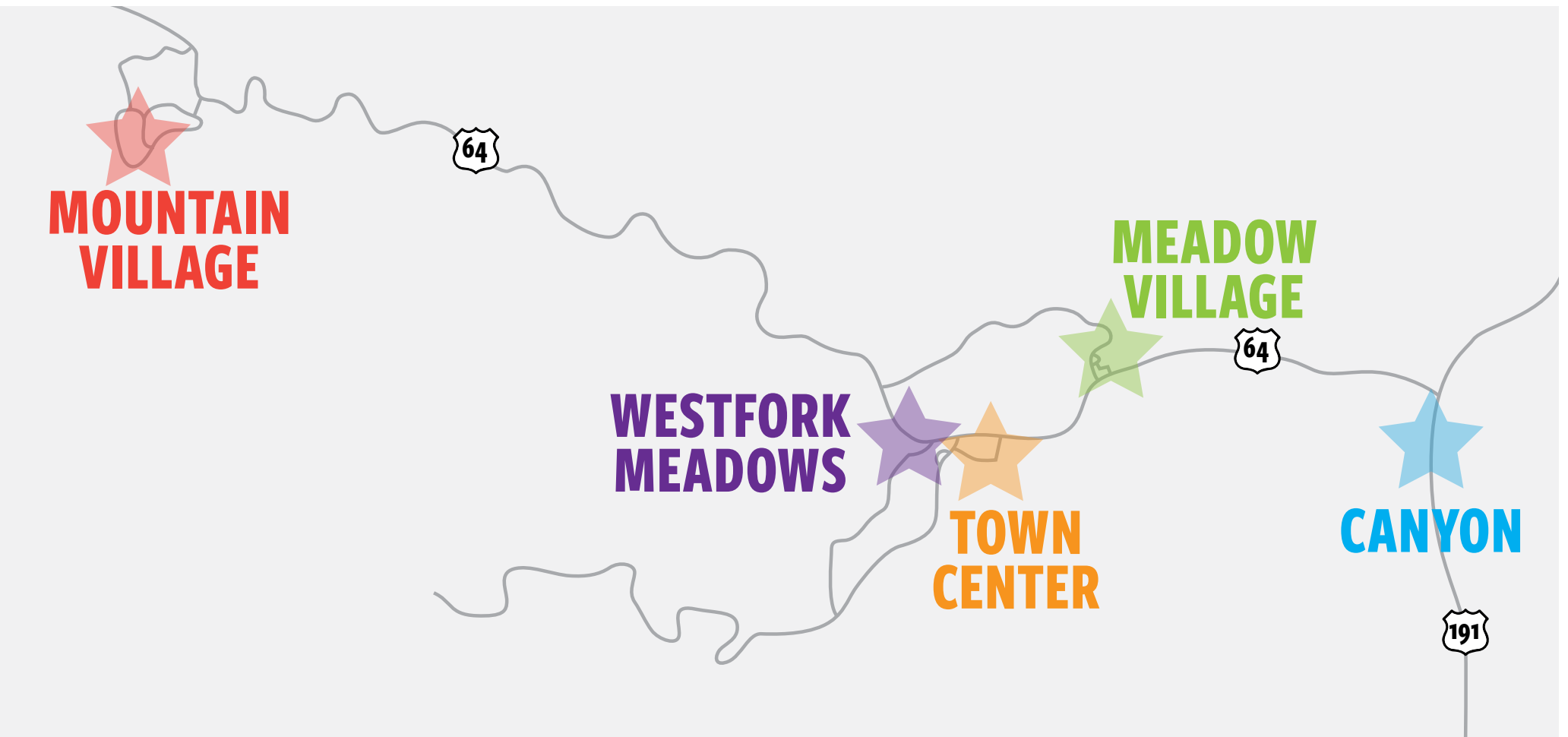
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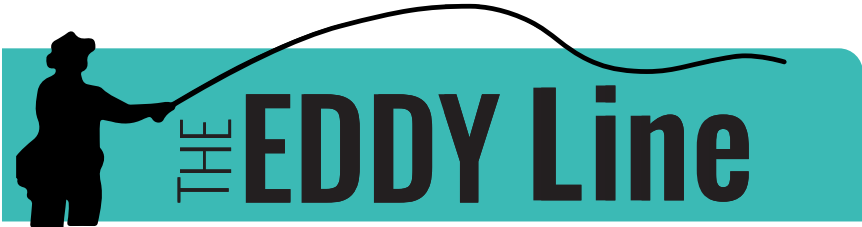
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What it means to match the hatch

BY PATRICK STRAUB
EBS FISHING COLUMNIST

In the days before the internet and social media, anglers had to contact or visit a local fly shop to learn what was “hatching” on a local river. Via a smart phone, present day anglers have a wealth of information accessible anytime. As more, if not all, fly shops and outfitters embrace social media, a quick scroll through Instagram tells the story of what is hatching at any given time.

However, it can get overwhelming trying to muddle through the various hatches when all you want to do is go fishing and catch a few fish. Having a basic understanding of insect activity is important to bringing more fish to hand. With an emphasis on basic, here’s some help to understand what it means to match the hatch.

How a hatch begins

Trout streams, whether in Montana or Argentina, all have aquatic insects. These aquatic insects make-up the majority of a fish’s diet. When certain conditions occur—such as fluctuations in water temperature or clarity or more or less sunlight protruding into the water—many of these insects undergo substantial change, often as part of the process to find another insect in hopes of meeting and mating, thus reproducing. This process—



A trout caught on a dry fly is the perfect reward for the blending of skill and knowledge that it takes to match a hatch. PHOTO COURTESY OF DRYFLYMONTANA.COM

aquatic insects moving, migrating or morphing—all can constitute a hatch.

A bug’s life

Keeping things basic, aquatic insects typically have four life stages. First on the journey of life is the nymph or larvae stage. Insects spend most of their existence in this stage. Nymphs and larvae live in the subsurface, clinging or crawling on rocks and submerged logs, banks or other structure. When water temperatures rise or fall, nymphs and larvae change, emerging into the second stage—the emerging stage.

This process can take a few minutes or a few days, depending on the species. For example, many caddis and mayflies emerge from nymph to adult in a matter of hours, while many stoneflies take several days. In this stage the bugs transform from subsurface insects to flying or land-based, which creates the third stage, adulthood. Adult insects flying in the air or crawling on banks or willows is a legit “hatch.” During this adult stage, insects strive to find a mate. If successful, eggs will be laid back into the water and shortly after the adults will die, closing the lifecycle loop at the fourth stage, spinners. Dead insects on the water are called “spent” or “spinners.” These lifeless, floating insects can be easy pickings for hungry trout.

Where to expect hatches on your favorite river

A general knowledge of where in a river insects’ may hatch is crucial to catch more fish during a hatch. Many mayfly and caddis species live in shallow riffles. Because these insects hatch in fast moving, shallow riffles, trout must choose quickly whether or not to eat a floating adult—which means anglers often can fish to hungry and opportunistic trout. Salmon and stoneflies hatch after nymphs have crawled on subsurface structure to get close to an exposed bank, emerge from shucks and hatch into clinging and crawling adults. Fishing a salmon or stonefly hatch requires anglers to fish flies near banks or slightly protruding structures.

There are plenty of exciting local hatches still to come

Shortly after snowmelt runoff, the salmon and stoneflies hatch on the Gallatin, Madison and Yellowstone Rivers. Because snowmelt runoff has ceased, anglers now focus on smaller insects, such as mayflies and caddis. The Gallatin is known for hatches of caddis in the evenings and PMDs during the day. Throughout the summer months, the Madison River will also see hatches of PMDs and caddis. The Yellowstone River is the last to clear after snowmelt runoff, so anglers may still find some lingering larger stoneflies, but caddis and smaller stoneflies, such as the Yellow Sally stonefly, will remain on the menu.

For many of us, few things in fly fishing match the thrill of seeing a fish rush to the surface to engulf a well-presented dry fly. Some of us enjoy the patience it takes to painstakingly work to get the perfect presentation to a finicky feeder along a bank and eventually have the fish effortlessly sip-in our dry fly. Matching a hatch is both a skill and reward of our great sport but one every angler should embrace.

Patrick Straub is a veteran guide and outfitter and has fished the world over. 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 eight years. He’s owned a fly shop and was one of the largest outfitters in Montana, but these days he now only guides anglers who value quality over quantity. If you want to fish with him, visit his website, <https://www.dryflymontana.com/>.



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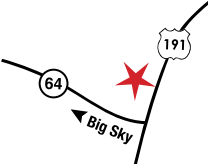


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Wildfire is meaner these days



BY STEPHEN PYNE

As I look out my window, the smoke from the Bush Fire is belching upward behind the fabled profile of the Superstition Mountains. The fire has closed Arizona State Route 87 that joins the Phoenix metro area to Payson, one of its exurbs. Some small communities are evacuating.

Otherwise the fire is foraging widely across Tonto National Forest and the Mazatzal Mountains, through wilderness and scattered inholdings alike. At the moment it's 90,000 acres and 5 percent contained. If it can't be stopped at Arizona State Route 188 and Lake Roosevelt, it will burn until the monsoon rains arrive. But this is not what I find interesting.

What is interesting is that a year ago I watched, through the same window, the 126,000-acre Woodbury fire boil out of the Superstitions. In 2004 I watched the 119,000-acre Willow Fire shut down Highway 87. Meanwhile, the smoke from the Bighorn Fire is lighting up the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson. This is beginning to look like a pattern.

Which it is. What people had taken as a normal for fire in the West is in truth a historical anomaly.

What we are seeing is an old normal, like seasonal flu, that has mutated into a meaner variant. Most of the West is built to burn. But for a few decades after the Second World War, climate was mild, landscapes were still recovering from the havoc of axe, pick and plow during settlement, fire agencies aggressively suppressed any starts, and an industrial economy stripped away open fire from homes and cities. Fire had become increasingly missing from agriculture, and astonishingly, even from wildlands.

Fifty years after the Big Blowup of 1910 burned 3 million acres to announce an American way of fire, the United States, led by the U.S. Forest Service, had effectively contained landscape fire. The largest category of wildfire (Class G) applied to fires that exceeded 5,000 acres. Fire control accounted for 13 percent of the Forest Service's budget. The militarization of suppression through war-surplus equipment managed to sustain a cold war on fire.

But by then the folly of this strategy, both economic and ecologic, was becoming more apparent. Between 1968 and 1978 new policies were promulgated to restore good fire and shrink the prospects for bad fire. Results have been mixed.

Florida burns 2.5 million acres a year while the entire western United States burns only about 3 million. In the West, it has proved a lot easier to take fire out than to put it back. Still, most of the fire community appreciated that we were facing a fire crisis and that, when the weather veered into less benevolent forms, big fires would return.

By the time the fires of Yellowstone (1988) and Oakland (1991) burned, the contours of the new old normal were apparent. A long drought foreshadowed outright climate change. Fuels stockpiled. Landscapes degraded. Exurbs recolonized formerly rural lands with urbanites. Megafires blasted unchecked.

Fifty years after the federal agencies thought fire a menace of the past, like polio or smallpox, monsters romped over the mountains like a returned plague. A few killed crews. Some burned into and through towns. Fire suppression consumed over 50 percent of the Forest Service's budget.

A fire crisis was evolving into a fire epoch as the sum of humanity's combustion practices, including fossil fuels, were creating the fire equivalent of an ice age.

What we can say about fire and the West has been said, over and again, notching every contributing cause, every rerun of tragedy, until it seems a white-noise hum like cicadas in the summer.

But COVID-19, now complicating the maturing fire season, suggests an analogy because fire is also a contagion phenomenon. We protect communities by hardening against embers—wearing masks to protect against aerial droplets—and by social distancing—aka defensible space. We rely on herd immunity—the good fires help check the spread of bad ones. We flatten the curve. We prepare to live with coronavirus until a vaccine can be created.

Here, the analogy cracks. There is no vaccine for fire. It's not only omnipresent; it's necessary. We have some say over what kinds of fire happen and what damages they might inflict. But we will have to live with fire and air filled with its smoke. Forever.

Stephen Pyne is a contributor to Writersontherange.org, a nonprofit dedicated to lively discussion about the West. His most recent books on fire include Between Two Fires: A Fire History of Contemporary America, and To the Last Smoke, a series of nine regional fire surveys. He lives in Queen Creek, Arizona.



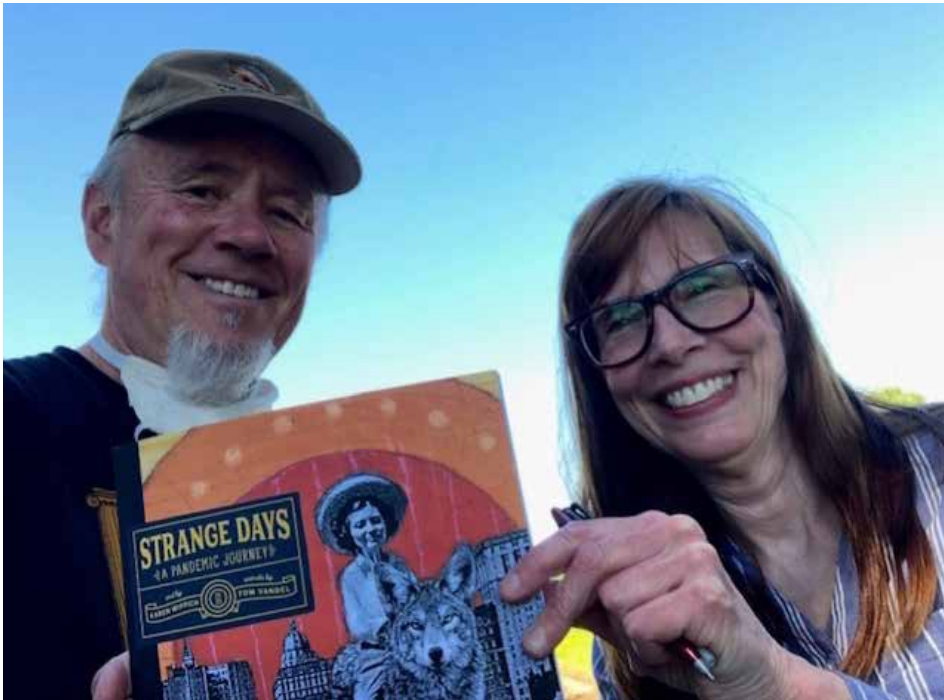
A wildfire burns in Lowell, Idaho. In his Writers on the Range column, Stephen Pyne explores how wildfires in the West have evolved and what role human interactions have played in that evolution. PHOTO BY MARCUS KAUFFMAN

Local writer chronicles journey through pandemic

BY MIRA BRODY

BIG SKY – By now, two skills have been realized to emerge from a pandemic: collaborating from a distance and dealing with the unknown. For writer and part-time Big Sky resident Tom Vandel and painter Karen Wippich, that’s exactly how they produced their newest book, “Strange Days: A Pandemic Journey.”

While spaced miles apart, Wippich and Vandel created the journal-style art book that captures the experience of the current pandemic from different perspectives. It matches 48 of Wippich’s original paintings with Vandel’s prose-poem musings in a unique chronicle.



Writer Tom Vandel and painter Karen Wippich have known each other for 20 years and teamed up to write “Strange Days: a pandemic journey.” PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM VANDEL

Ironically, the idea for a book was already on the pair’s mind before COVID-19 hit, and became a saving grace when the economy—and life as we knew it—hit a standstill.

“Thank God I had this thing to do with Karen. I don’t know what I would have done otherwise,” Vandel said. “For me writing about a tough subject is better if I just start writing it, because once you write something, it crystalizes your thinking about it.”

The paintings mix old, uncopyrighted black and white photography with a vibrant palette of paint accents, sometimes with photoshopped tweaks, such as a family gathered around a single toilet paper roll, one member with the head of a cat.

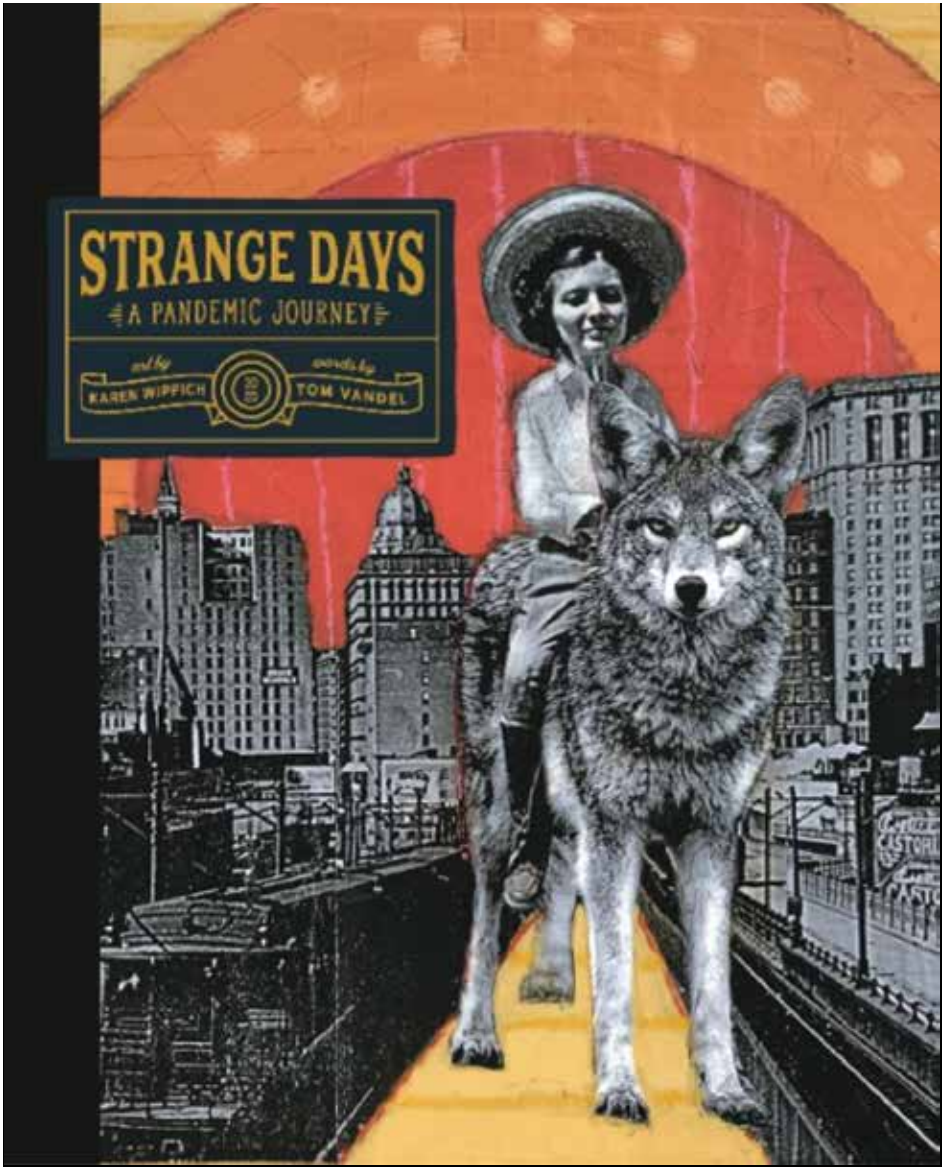
“It was hard to capture,” Vandel said. “I was trying to make something out of her painting but also the coronavirus and all the experiences we’re all going through. Sometimes she wouldn’t tell me anything about [the images] and I would have to pull a theme out.”

It isn’t the first time the duo have worked creatively. They met 20 years ago as officemates in Portland, Wippich working as a graphic designer at the time and Vandel at his copywriting business, Les Overhead. He’s still copywriting, but says it is a career he is slowly retiring from. Their first art book, “Driving Strangers: Diary of an Uber Driver,” captures Vandel’s observations during his time as an Uber driver.

So far, the book, which is up on Amazon, has been well received. Vandel says he intends for the subject matter to be relatable and objective so the reader can pull from it their own personal journey through this bizarre and

unprecedented time. Just as it helped him remain productive and process his own pandemic journey, he hopes it will do the same for others.

“None of us have gone through any of this and this is a way to deal with the emotions of it,” Vandel said. “People want to look to art more and more during moments like this when there’s a calamity. Art helps explain it, helps them go through it, helps them laugh at it.”



“Strange Days: a pandemic journey” documents the experiences of our current pandemic through 48 of Wippich’s original paintings with Vandel’s prose-poem musings in a unique chronicle. PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM VANDEL



“Victory Garden” is a painting by Karen Wippich featured in “Strange Days” where a family pays homage to a roll of toilet paper. PHOTO BY KAREN WIPPICH

BIG SKY EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, July 17 – Thursday, July 30

If your event falls between July 31 and Aug. 13, please submit it by July 8 by emailing media@outlaw.partners

FRIDAY, JULY 17
Total Archery Challenge
Big Sky Resort, 7 a.m.

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

SATURDAY, JULY 18
Kifaru Mountain Mile Montana
Big Sky Resort, 7 a.m.

Big Sky Art Auction
Town Center, 10 a.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 19
Big Sky Art Auction
Town Center, 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, JULY 21
Come Get Your Qi On
Big Sky Community Park, 11 a.m.

Bogert Farmers Market
Lindey Park, Bozeman, 5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22
Hike Big Sky
Beehive Basin Trailhead, 9 a.m.

Community Yoga
Wilson Plaza, 10:30 a.m.

Big Sky Farmers Market
Town Cetner, 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 23
Aaron Henrey Trunk Show
Shelly Bermont Fire Jewelry, 11 a.m.

Food and Spirit Workshop
Santosha Wellness Center, 4:30 p.m.

Music on Main
The Rialto Bozeman, 6 p.m.

Music in the Mountains: The Kitchen Dwellers
Arts Council of Big Sky Facebook Live, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 25
Gallatin Valley Farmers Market
Gallatin Valley Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

ARTventures: composing the perfect photo
Arts Council of Big Sky, 10 a.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 26
Observational Drawing Class
Register at: selisa@centurylink.net

MONDAY, JULY 27
Parks, Trails & Recreation Celebration
Crail Ranch Museum, 9 a.m.

TUESDAY, JULY 28
Parks, Trails & Recreation Celebration
Hummucks Trail, 9 a.m.

Bogert Farmers Market
Lindey Park, Bozeman, 5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29
Hike Big Sky: Photography
Ousel Falls Trailhead, 9 a.m.

Big Sky Farmers Market
Town Cetner, 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 30
Parks, Trails & Recreation Celebration
Little Willow Way, 9 a.m.

Music on Main
The Rialto Bozeman, 6 p.m.



BIG SKY ART AUCTION
SATURDAY, JULY 18 – SUNDAY, JULY 19
The 5th annual Big Sky Art Auction at the Wilson Hotel will feature a collection of 60 pieces of fine art, furniture and jewelry. An auction preview event will take place on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will allow guests to peruse auction items and interact with select artists and the live auction will occur on Sunday from 2-6 p.m. This year, auction attendees will be entertained by the rapid-fire delivery of Troy Black, one of the premier art auctioneers in the West. To allow art collectors from all over the country to participate in the event, bidders have the option of experiencing the auction virtually or in person. For more information, visit bigskyartauktion.com

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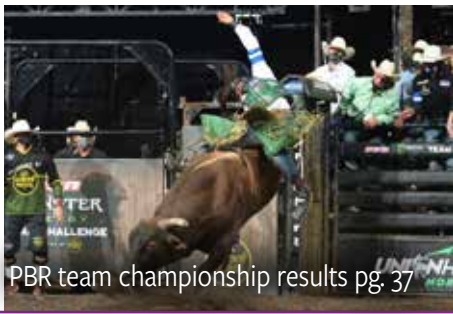


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SECTION 3:
BUSINESS, SPORTS,
HEALTH & FUN



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Golf tips from a pro pg. 38



Big Sky bites pg. 42

Making it in Big Sky: Lone Mountain Land Company

BY BRANDON WALKER

BIG SKY – Lone Mountain Land Company joined the Big Sky real estate scene in the fall of 2014. LMLC is a partner of both the Moonlight Club and the Spanish Peaks Mountain Club, handling real estate happenings at each of the respective clubs.

LMLC employees were subject to a drastic change, similar to that of many Big Sky businesses, when their office space was closed on March 16 as a precaution due to COVID-19. After working remotely for roughly a month, a handful employees began trickling back into the LMLC office.

A lot transpired during that time in the world of real estate and Explore Big Sky recently spoke over the phone with LMLC Vice President of Planning and Development Bayard Dominick regarding the happenings of real estate development during a pandemic and its possible lasting effects on the industry.

Explore Big Sky: *What was it like to transition from your daily routine of communicating with developers in the office to suddenly having to work with them from home?*

Bayard Dominick: “It was more suddenly interfacing with all our engineers, contractors [and] architects, instead of having weekly in-person meetings, to weekly Zoom meetings and it actually was pretty efficient. I mean from the development side, we didn’t have a significant impact on what we do day-to-day, it was all via phone and computer and video conferencing instead of in-person, but a lot of what we do already is on the phone and via video conferencing because a lot of our architects and engineers aren’t in Big Sky anyway, so it wasn’t a huge change to be honest with you. Probably the biggest change was ... we have an office here between our real estate development company and the sales team, we have like 40 people normally in the office ... not interfacing with our day-to-day team members in person was probably the biggest change.”

EBS: *From a business perspective, what will you remember most when you reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic?*

B.D.: “Uncertainty and doubt, just like what’s coming next and how bad is it going to get and how much is it going to impact our business and how much is it going to impact our personal lives, just that uncertainty and you know there’s an anxiety around that uncertainty that still exists. It’s coming back more than it was, like a month ago I felt a lot less anxiety than I do today ... One really cool aspect of the pandemic and staying at home, is it felt like Big Sky has grown closer as a community. We went walking in our neighborhood almost every day, we got to know our neighbors a lot better through the process. It was a really cool byproduct of this experience and I hope that it continues as we come out of the other side of this.”

EBS: *LMLC purchased Buck’s T-4 before the pandemic disrupted life as we knew it. Did your team have any hesitations from that purchase when COVID-19 shut down places of business?*

B.D.: “No, we were fully committed to doing it. We had made that commitment to the sellers and we’re moving forward. We know long-term we have huge belief in the long-term future of Big Sky and definitely believe in the Buck’s T-4 asset. [We] felt like the restaurant is such an incredible community asset that we were committed to getting that reopened and felt long-term that the Buck’s hotel and the potential development and employee housing potential there was such that we were moving forward regardless.”



Bayard Dominick of Lone Mountain Land Company pictured with his daughter, Ashby Dominick. PHOTO COURTESY OF BAYARD DOMINICK

EBS: *Are prospective buyers opting to tour homes or properties virtually rather than in person due to COVID-19?*

B.D.: “I don’t have any firsthand experience. I think there’s a lot of that happening definitely ... and anecdotally I hear that people are buying properties site unseen, in terms of going there in person, but I don’t know what percentage of that’s true. I haven’t had that personal experience.”

EBS: *Can you describe the effect that the pandemic has had on the real estate market?*

B.D.: “I mean only anecdotally. My sense was that there were definitely some contracts that people were nervous about moving forward with but of all the developer product that we had under contract—almost all of the deals have moved forward and we’ve gotten several new ones and I think everybody’s as busy as they’ve ever been.”

EBS: *Shoulder season fluctuations aside, do you believe the virus will continue to affect your business?*

B.D.: “I think it’s going to affect all of our business in the way we deal with our day-to-day lives for the foreseeable future ... Over the last two weeks in Big Sky we’ve seen a, you know, resurgence of people being committed to wearing masks and a larger percentage of people are wearing masks and people are being more diligent and I think that diligence is going to have to continue for a long time. Both in our daily lives and the way we manage our construction jobs and the way we interface with our contractors and engineers and it’s going to continue to be as much remote stuff as possible.”

EBS: *If you could choose one aspect of life before the pandemic to restore, what would it be and why?*

B.D.: “Live music. The ability for us to gather and see amazing live music on a regular basis is what I miss the most.”

EBS: *What’s the best business advice you’ve ever received?*

B.D.: “Work for great mentors. That’s the key, is if you’re working for good, strong people who can teach you and teach you not only about business but how to treat people, those are the people you want to be working for and those are the ones [that] you aspire to be.”

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Enjoying the Ride: When living fast and enjoying life



BY SCOTT BROWN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

In this fast paced life most of us lead, sometimes we forget or conveniently neglect personal and professional risks staring us in the face. In many cases, these risks can be addressed by different types of insurance. As a financial advisor I have assisted clients with protecting or hedging many types of risk throughout my career.

Interestingly enough, one of the more challenging conversations to have with clients is regarding life insurance coverage. Sometimes people are uncomfortable discussing their own or a loved one's mortality, while others feel they don't need it, or don't believe in it. Still others lump insurance professionals in with other careers that the public considers dishonest or view negatively.

Finally, many believe they already have enough through their employer. Regardless of whether or not one believes they need coverage or even if they want coverage at all, it is still a very important conversation as it relates to the larger discussion of comprehensive financial planning. Very simply stated, it is necessary to improve your basic knowledge of personal finances and how to protect your wealth and the wealth of those you care about and love.

The fact is, most people will have a need for life insurance at some point in their lives. It is also true that most people young and old alike want to live life to the fullest! Does anyone else hear Van Halen's David Lee Roth belting out "I live my life like there's no tomorrow..."

So what is life insurance? Life insurance is a contract between an insurance policy holder and an insurer, where the insurer promises to pay a designated beneficiary a sum of money in exchange for a premium, upon the death of an insured person. The policy holder typically pays a premium, either regularly or as one lump sum.

When considering life insurance, the first question that needs answering is, do I need life insurance? Let me answer that question with a question: Will someone or something (a family member, a family business, a business partner or perhaps charity) suffer financially if you die? If the answer's yes, then you may need life insurance.

If you know you need coverage you may ask, don't I already have life insurance through work? Maybe you do, however, it's typically not enough to meet most people's needs especially if you have or plan on starting a family.

Continuing, as both your family and career grow you may ask, how much insurance coverage do I need? Everyone's financial goals and needs are different, so there's no hard and fast rule of thumb. Different factors for consideration include the size of your family, family member's ages, day-to-day basic living expenses, longer term needs like paying for college, paying off a mortgage and a comfortable retirement for your spouse. When you consider all the varying needs your family has, you may find you actually need somewhere between five to 10 times your current annual income in total coverage.

Another question some of you readers may be asking yourselves is what kinds of life insurance are there? The short answer to this is, there are many different kinds of life insurance products, each offering varying benefits. That said, there are two main categories: Term and Permanent.

Term insurance provides protection or coverage for a specified period of time, say 20 years. Term could work for insureds hoping to cover their peak earning years and their kid's college for example. Permanent insurance offers you lifelong protection, including a death benefit and the added advantage of accumulating cash value that's tax deferred. It's like having insurance and an investment in one policy. There are many types of policies including whole life, universal life and variable universal life just to name a few. These policies may also help with some estate planning needs as well.

At this point you may be asking; how can I get life insurance? In addition to employer-provided life insurance (should you have that as an option), you can purchase insurance directly from a provider, via online, over the phone or by mail, or through an intermediary, such as an insurance broker or financial advisor.

Another important question is simply, how much does life insurance cost? Insurance rates (premiums) are based primarily on life expectancy and there are a lot of factors that go into figuring that out. These include your gender, current age, health and health history, as well as your lifestyle (smoking, alcohol consumption, extreme sports activities like sky diving, scuba etc.). That's why it's a good idea to buy life insurance as early as possible. The longer you wait, the more rates will increase based solely on your age.

Many people ask what does life insurance cover? Well should you die, the proceeds of the policy can be used for almost anything, like paying off outstanding debt (mortgages, credit cards, car payments), household bills (rent, utilities, maintenance), healthcare expenses, college tuition, family business continuity, funding a spouses' retirement plan, funeral costs etc.

As a potential next step, I have compiled a list of good questions to ask about a life insurance company including, is the company financially sound? Look for a company that has shown financial strength as judged by major rating agencies such as AM Best, S&P, Weiss and Moody's. This is important because the financial ratings reflect the life insurance company's ability to pay claims in the future.

How long has the company been selling life insurance? A company with years of experience may be better able to help you find a life insurance solution that works for you and your family. What can the company offer me? Companies have different areas of focus or expertise and therefore the terms and pricing of policies may differ widely depending on each policyholder's situation and the insurer's business structure.

What will I be required to do? Ask about medical exams and personal financial disclosures and the overall application process, which may include other required steps and disclosures. Finally, what is their customer support like? Good customer support is essential as you want to make sure that the carrier will take your situation seriously to ensure a smooth and easy experience from the time your application is submitted to when you receive your policy contract. Maybe more importantly, in the event of your death you want to feel confident that the insurer will work closely with your family in a caring and empathetic manner and to pay the death settlement as soon as possible.

For some reason, thinking about life insurance coverage always reminds me of the famous James Dean quote "Live fast, die young, and have a good-looking corpse." Of course, I simply want all of you to enjoy the ride of your entire life whether its cut painfully short or long, fruitful and full of meaning surrounded by the people and things you love! Until next time be safe and have fun out there!

Scott L. Brown is the cofounder and managing principal of Shore to Summit Wealth Management. His wealth management career spans more than 25 years and he currently works and lives in Bozeman, MT with his wife and two sons.

Life101

Why Are You Storing All That Stuff?



BY LINDA ARNOLD
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

If you’ve been bitten by the organizing bug during COVID-19, you may want to take things a step further. Consider these sobering statistics:

- One in four homeowners can’t park in his or her garage.
- The United States has more storage facilities than McDonald’s and Starbucks combined.
- And 90 percent of ours are full!

When I heard those statistics from the Self Storage Association, I was floored. Are you one of those who can’t park in your garage?

Storage units

What are we holding onto, anyway? It turns out 30 percent of storage units are rented by businesses to store records, equipment, etc. That means 70 percent are rented by consumers, paying an average of \$100 per month.

The self-storage business started a few decades ago, with some mini-warehouses located around military bases; now it’s a \$22 billion industry.

The rationale for storing items generally falls into several categories:

1. I might need this someday.
2. I don’t feel right throwing it out since it was Mom’s, Dad’s, etc.
3. I don’t know what to do with it.
4. I have an emotional attachment to it.
5. The kids may want it.

There are obviously valid reasons to store things. Many times, though, storage units are the result of indecision – or “kicking the can down the road” and rarely are the contents of the units examined.

Then you have to ask yourself—after a five-year period—whether this procrastination was worth \$6,000.

Committing purgery

I’ll admit these statistics struck a nerve with me because I’m in the midst of a major organizational project with two upstairs rooms.

My project is titled “Committing Purgery.” Note the spelling, it’s not the legal type, instead it describes my resolve to purge things that are no longer useful and taking up too much space.

The task is easier said than done, though. Like you, I’ve probably read every organizational article that comes across my radar, not to mention drooling over those beautiful organizational systems—in all those bright colors!

I’m actually an organized person overall. I’m proactive and driven, sometimes to a fault. I’ve just let a couple of rooms in my house become catchalls for books, papers and files.

Surface mining

Like most people, you probably have at least a few piles lying around—especially if you’re now working from home. Piles can form anywhere and they tend to multiply. Before you know it, the surface becomes crowded again.

That’s when it’s time to do some “surface mining.” It’s amazing how much a clean surface contributes to peace of mind. This is an exercise that needs to be repeated frequently, though, lest that dastardly “pile creep” beast rear its ugly head again.

Then there are the decisions of what to do with the items in the pile. Of course, we all know those systems of dealing with paper once—act on it, file it or discard it. Sometimes, however, you don’t have the time at the moment to file something.

Indecision can also be a factor. You find yourself wanting to keep that program or souvenir and then it becomes a decision for later. Not to mention that precious “refrigerator art” from the kids and grandkids. Where do you file these, anyway?

My sister recently purged a lot of miscellaneous items she’s moved from house to house over the years and one of the boxes contains decades of Playbill programs from Broadway plays. They’ve moved from Washington, DC to Utah to Montana!

Looking at the calendar

Now that we’re entering the second half of the year, it may be a good time to visit those storage units. If other family members are involved, invite them to come along. Take a look at the five earlier reasons cited for holding onto things as enough time may have passed that you can deal with the contents more rationally.

You have five months before the year-end holidays. This could be the perfect gift to give one another!

Linda Arnold is a syndicated columnist, psychological counselor and founder of a multistate marketing company. Reader comments are welcome at linda@lindaarnold.org or visit www.lindaarnold.org for more information on her books.

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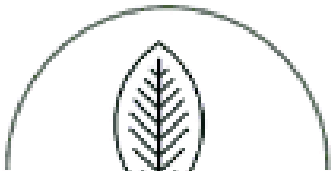
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Fans return for PBR team challenge championship

Team Cooper Tires takes home title

BY BRANDON WALKER

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA – The Professional Bull Riders tour officially became the first professional sporting event in the U.S. to welcome spectators back to the arena on the weekend of July 10-12.

“It was an historic weekend for PBR, and all sports when you consider everyone’s goal is hosting fans back in the arena, safely and responsibly,” said PBR CEO Sean Gleason. “PBR is getting back to business in very challenging times, and getting back feels great. To begin the weekend, we were extremely fortunate to have all of our athletes, stock contractors and crew test negative for COVID-19.”

Following weeks of planning with state and local officials, PBR hosted fans for the culmination of the PBR Monster Energy Team Challenge at the Denny Sanford PREMIER Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In an email to EBS, Gleason applauded his staff’s efforts to continue providing PBR competition, including those without spectators, over the course of the pandemic.

“... That said, there’s nothing quite like bringing fans back into the arena for a full-blown PBR production, pyro and all. The excitement and energy level rises a notch,” Gleason said.

Back in the bucking chutes, Team Cooper Tires, led by the No. 1 ranked bull rider in the world Jose Vitor Leme, capped off a perfect 8-0 season with decisive victories over

Team Ariat and Team Pendleton Whisky to capture the PBR Monster Energy Team Challenge championship.

“This feels amazing in front of these great fans,” said Keyshawn Whitehorse of Team Cooper Tires. “It doesn’t get much better than this.”



Team Cooper Tires rider Keyshawn Whitehorse competes in the PBR Monster Energy Team Challenge versus Team Pendleton Whisky in the championship match. PHOTO BY ANDY WATSON, BULLSTOCK MEDIA

Having secured a first-round bye, Team Cooper Tires dispatched Team Ariat on July 11 by more than 255 event aggregate points at 344.75-89. Whitehorse showcased a strong performance in the matchup, completing both of his rides for the contest, while Leme added an 86.5 event aggregate point ride of his own.

In the championship match, Leme and Whitehorse came through again, completing the only two qualifying rides of the game versus Team Pendleton Whisky, resulting in a 177.25-0 shutout.

“I’m so happy and we’re so blessed to win,” Leme said. “I have to thank these guys with me, and the fans that were here this weekend. Thank you all.”

Leme’s efforts throughout the PBR team challenge were recognized when he was named the Built Ford Tough most valuable player. In total, he completed qualifying rides on 11 of the 16 bulls that he rode throughout the competition.

Gleason hopes to continue welcoming fans to arenas as PBR continues with competitions.

“... We will continue to work with local professionals up until the minute of each event to ensure that we are making safe and responsible decisions. Our goal is to provide a safe and controlled environment for our fans to continue to enjoy PBR responsibly,” he said.

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OUTLAW PARTNERS

100-hole golf marathon benefits local nonprofit

BY BRANDON WALKER

BIG SKY – The day began at 7:30 a.m. as Mark Wehrman teed off with his driver, slicing through the slight breeze of the cool morning air on the first hole of the Big Sky Golf Course and concluded at 8:30 p.m. with Brad Rierson’s putt on the 100th hole, completing the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Country golf marathon.

On July 13, 10 golfers combined their efforts over the course of the 13-hour day, hitting the links to participate in the BBBS of Big Sky Country golf marathon fundraiser.

“We had some spectators cheering us on and watching us as we were getting ready to go,” said Wehrman, the Head Golf Professional at the Big Sky Golf Course and one of the participants in the golf marathon, adding that the atmosphere of the marathon even rivaled that of a traditional golf tournament.

The group accomplished their goal of completing 100 holes of golf for the day—aided by a slight modification in play after 54 holes when two groups split up, rather than the original lone group of rotating players, to double their efforts and complete holes at a quicker pace due to the impending darkness.

“It was one of the most enjoyable days of golf that I have ever had,” said John Hannahs, one of the 10 participants in the golf marathon. “Uniting for a noble cause that does so much for our community and playing a game that I love with my dear friends is my idea of a great day.”

The golf marathon took the place of the traditional BBBS of Big Sky Country celebrity golf tournament, which would have been entering its 19th year but was canceled this year as a precautionary measure due to COVID-19.

“It feels good just to be able to say this is for a really good cause and this is really helping the kids,” said Amy Hunter, the Big Sky Program Coordinator for BBBS of Big Sky Country.

The golfers: Dylan Hall, Hannahs, Al Malinowski, Andy Nystuen, Betsy Nystuen, Carl Nystuen, Jeanine Palma, Rierson, Jerry Scott, and Wehrman all completed at least one full round of golf on behalf of BBBS of Big Sky Country’s fundraiser. Carl Nystuen put forth a valiant effort, leading the charge with 77 holes completed for the day.

“[I’m] more just tired; not sore or anything like that,” Wehrman said. “My body held up good and from you know the other guys I talked to, I don’t think anyone’s really necessarily sore, they’re just more at an exhaustion level.”

While not the traditional tournament that participants have come to anticipate each year according to Hunter, the marathon still provided an outlet for the golfers partaking in an activity that they enjoy for a good cause.

“It was refreshing to be able to take our minds off the current state of the world and just focus on playing golf and enjoying each other’s company,” Hannahs said.

BBBS of Big Sky Country’s fundraising goal of \$65,000 wasn’t quite met, with donations made on a per hole pledge basis, but the event raised over \$25,000. Hunter said that the fundraising webpage will be taken down on the evening of July 14, but individuals still interested in making a donation could do so on the BBBS of Big Sky Country website. She also said all funds raised will benefit BBBS of Big Sky Country programs.

“Being able to help with fundraising or do something that makes those programs possible you know is huge,” Hunter said. “Because without fundraising, without these events, we wouldn’t be able to have the programs.”

She also described the toughest challenge surrounding the golf marathon was providing engagement for the community being that it was a downsized event in comparison to the usual golf tournament held by BBBS of Big Sky Country.

“No one was doing it because they had to,” Wehrman said of the golfers enthusiasm to participate in the event. “Everyone was doing it [because they wanted to] and having fun doing it.”

Wehrman said the two groups joined forces once again to complete the final five holes together, capping their tremendous effort on the day, all in the name of a good cause.

“These kids wouldn’t be able to build those relationships and just strengthen their confidence and to better understand how to interact with people of different ages and ... just look beyond themselves and see the impact they can have on other people’s lives,” Hunter said.

Golf Tips from a Pro: Aim small miss small

BY MARK WEHRMAN
EBS CONTRIBUTOR

Are you aligning yourself to the target correctly? Do you have a target? Are you picking an intermediate target? From my experience, teaching golf for the past 20 years, alignment is the most overlooked fundamental in golf.

But why? Golf is certainly a target orientated game. I like to use the old adage that relates to throwing darts: Aim small and you will miss small. The more specific you can be about your target, likely, the closer your mishits will be to your target. This is important because golf is all about maximizing your mishits. Golf is not a game of perfection.

This all begs the question; how do we align ourselves to the target correctly? Well, first off, we should always start behind the ball. Pick your very specific target using the strategy that if you mishit your shot you don’t get yourself in to trouble for the next shot position. More specifically, if the hole location is on the right side of the green and there is a bunker guarding the right side of the green then you should pick a target left of the hole somewhere. That way, if you miss your shot to the right you don’t end up in the bunker.

Another example would be if you are on the tee box and there are out of bounds boundaries on the left side of the hole and another hole on the right side. Taking into account these factors, your target should favor the



Mark Wehrman, Head Golf Professional at the Big Sky Golf Course, displaying proper parallel alignment. PHOTO BY TOM CONWAY

right side of the fairway. So, rule No. 1 when picking your target is: always play away from trouble.

Next, while you are still standing behind the ball pick an intermediate target: something on the ground between your ball and your target. This could be an old divot hole, a weed, a discoloration or imperfection in the grass, an old broken tee, etc. This will help you aim your clubface better as it is much easier to aim at something 3-feet in front of you than something 300 yards away from you.

Once you have picked your intermediate target it is now time to approach the ball. When approaching the ball, I like to follow the acronym “CHEF”. This stands for club, hands, eyes, and feet. Aim the clubface at your intermediate target, put your hands on the grip, eye the target while setting your feet.

Lastly, we do not aim our feet at our target, but instead, parallel to your target. Your body lines, which consist of feet, knees, hips, shoulders, and eyes should all be aimed in the

same direction parallel to your target line, which is where your clubface is aimed.

Practicing proper alignment will make your mishits fall much closer to your target and your good shots will be rewarded with a shorter, easier follow-up shot. Remember, you are not going to hit every shot perfect, but if you have sound alignment you will always find the ball closer to your target.



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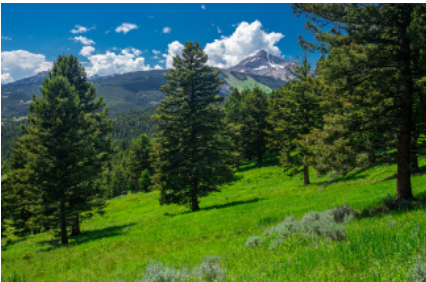


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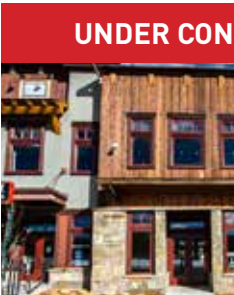
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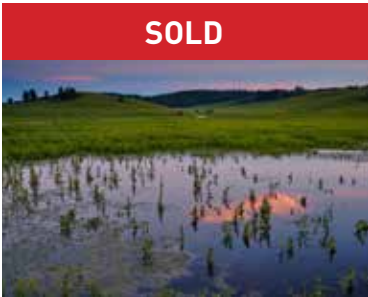


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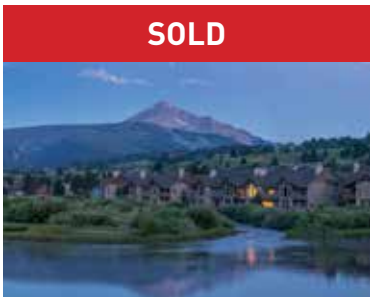
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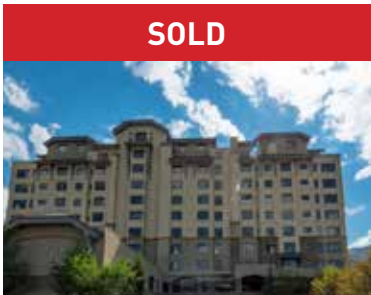
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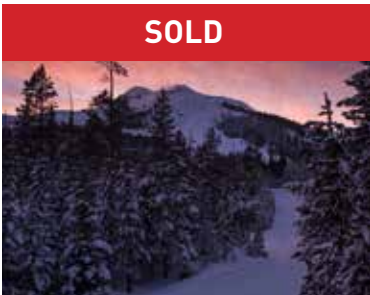
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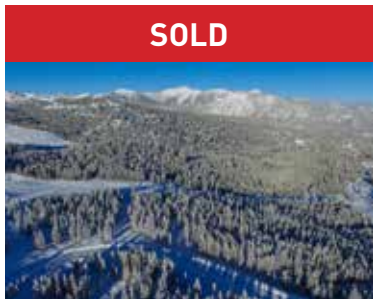
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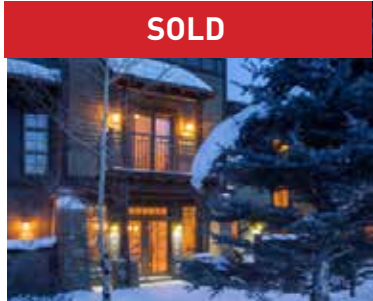
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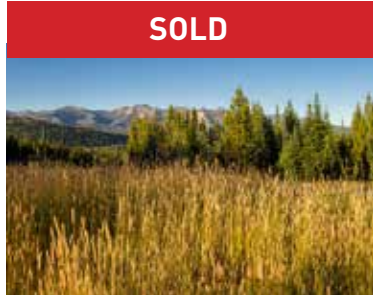
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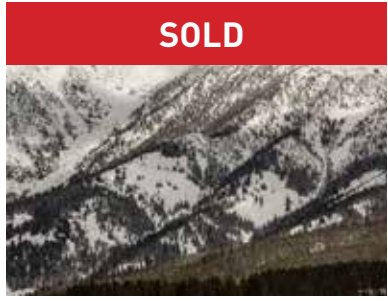
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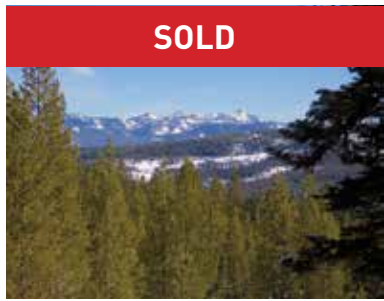
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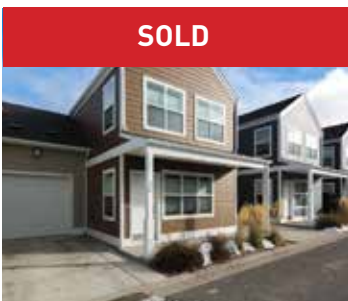
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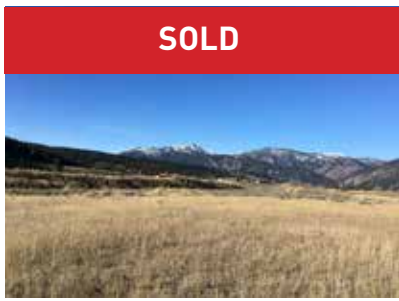
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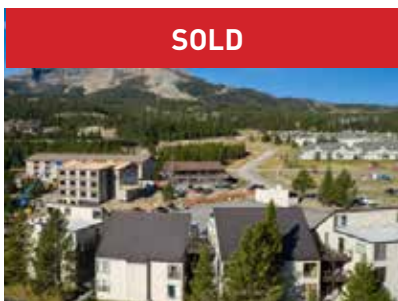
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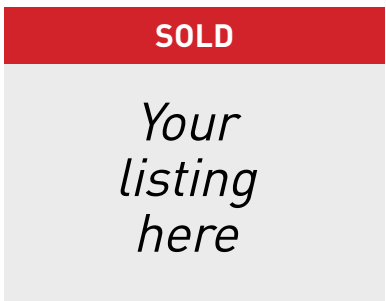
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BIG SKY BITES

BY MICHAEL SOMERBY

At 26 years old, some quick math determines I've enjoyed just shy of 30,000 meals in my lifetime thus far. It's a fairly baffling statistic.

Nonetheless, while I've trended toward a more vegetarian-oriented diet over the past 18 months, I'll likely never be averse to a well-cooked piece of quality steak, pork, chicken or fish. Ironically, the days I go without eating meat—and there are many in every week—only fortify that preference, but a number of factors have helped instill this omnivore's balance.

It's impossible to know exactly what percentage of those 30,000 plates of food included chicken, but I can probably estimate that due to price, supply, cultural popularity and ease of cooking, between 1-2 two dishes out of every 10 included some form of chicken. In other words, I've consumed between 3,000-6,000 chicken dishes in my lifetime, and that still may be an underrepresentation.

Why the breakdown? After so much exposure to chicken, rarely does a chicken dish surprise me as a result of its uniqueness of texture and flavor composition. That was until my younger sister decided to hone some cooking skills of her own during the quarantine, producing a chicken dish that is at once crispy and tender, salty and sweet and tangy.

As an added bonus, the simplicity of the dish—comprised mostly of whole foods—renders a simple, clean feeling to every bite. No thick sauces, no gobbledygook marinades. Just a delicious chicken dish sure to stop the show.

Recipe:
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 35 minutes
Servings: 3

- Ingredients:**
 - 1.5 pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
 - Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
 - 3 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 bunch scallions
 - 1 head of garlic, unpeeled and halved crosswise
- 2 cloves of garlic, smashed
 - 1 inch of fresh ginger root, finely grated
 - 2 tablespoons of fresh lime juice, plus 1 lime
 - 1 tablespoon soy sauce
 - 1 cup water
 - ¼ bunch of cilantro, chopped

Seared chicken thighs with scallions, ginger, garlic, lime and cilantro

- Instructions:**
1. Clean the chicken with a light rinse, then pat dry
 2. Season both sides generously with the salt and pepper
 3. In a cast iron pan or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium heat
 4. Add the chicken, skin side down and allow to cook until crisp, between 8-10 minutes
 5. Using tongs, flip the chicken onto the reverse side and allow to cook between 4-6 minutes
 6. Thinly slice two scallions and set aside
 7. Add both heads of garlic, cut side down, along with remaining whole scallions and season again with salt and pepper
 8. Cook until the scallions become browned, about 3 minutes
 9. Add the smashed garlic for 1-2 minutes
 10. Add the lime juice, soy sauce and water, and reduce heat to simmer
 11. Partially cover the chicken and allow to cook for 15-20 minutes, or until the liquid has reduced by 75 percent
 12. Remove from the pan, and serve with whole scallions, uncooked sliced scallions, garlic heads, lime slices and chopped cilantro
 13. Enjoy



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Back in the saddle again



BY SCOTT MECHURA
EBS FOOD COLUMNIST

While every state seems to have its own pace, the country is reopening its commerce once again and Buck’s T-4 Steakhouse is no exception.

While people were enjoying a little something extra in their stocking so to speak this spring and summer in the form of time away from work, I

know many people who were nevertheless anxious to get back to work; to return to their craft.

Friday, July 3, Buck’s joined the ranks of the re-opened, albeit under slightly different circumstances.

In addition to the usual COVID-19 challenges, Buck’s has found new ownership by way of Lone Mountain Land Company. While Dave and Chuck have moved on, Buck’s is still plugging away as always. It is the train that never seems to stop running.

But that’s not why I write. The community has no doubt heard by now of the changing of the guard, but what many wouldn’t necessarily know is that Buck’s opened back up on July 3 with 100 percent returning staff.

There’s an old saying in our industry that it is easier to be open than to get open. The work up to opening doors is never easy, though I would say that as leaders and managers, we may have things on our plate that the rest of the team doesn’t. But it is precisely that aforementioned team in any location or business that will make or break you.

I would put our team up against anyone. I realize the weight of such a statement, but while I know there is a plethora of talent in this community, we have built something at Buck’s that is rarely seen.

A team willing to go to bat for one another, a team that sees the big picture, and a team that understands the gravity of what Buck’s is and what we are doing. A team that is a family in the truest sense of the word.

It was Friday, July 3, at about 4:30 p.m. when we were having an impromptu gathering with our staff and Kevin Hinkle of Lone Mountain Land Company. As the team introduced themselves to him, I proudly let him know that this team was 100 percent returning employees. A hundred percent: Do you have any idea what that means in today’s workforce?

As previously mentioned, everyone went back to their rolls and duties. There’s opening a restaurant with new ownership, and then there is opening with a team that knows every step, every other co-workers nuances, and the “when this happens do this” situational understanding.

I have had some pretty proud moments in my countless tours of duty in this industry, but more than once on this Friday night I had to take a mental step back and absorb the moment, as I watched a veteran team just act with industry impunity.

Buck’s hadn’t seen a guest or family member since March 14, yet with the returning staff it felt like a mere four days rather than four months.

As we were in the throws of our first dinner rush of a new era, something we have done too many times to even count, one of the cook, who left us a few years ago and returned home, came up in my ear in a rare moment when I wasn’t moving and said “we have a good team chef.”

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



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American Life in Poetry:

Column 778

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

This week’s poem is one of my favorites and I can’t explain why in the fifteen years I’ve been writing this column I’ve neglected until now to share it with you. Wendell Berry is one of our country’s finest writers, a poet, a fiction writer, an activist and a Kentucky farmer. This poem is from New Collected Poems from Counterpoint Press, 2012. Berry’s most recent book of poetry is A Small Porch.

Before Dark

From the porch at dusk I watched
a kingfisher wild in flight
he could only have made for joy.

He came down the river, splashing
against the water’s dimming face
like a skipped rock, passing

on down out of sight. And still
I could hear the splashes
farther and farther away

as it grew darker. He came back
the same way, dusky as his shadow,
sudden beyond the willows.

The splashes went on out of hearing.
It was dark then. Somewhere
the night had accommodated him

--at the place he was headed for
or where, led by his delight,
he came.

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Corner Quote

“It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”
– Frederick Douglass

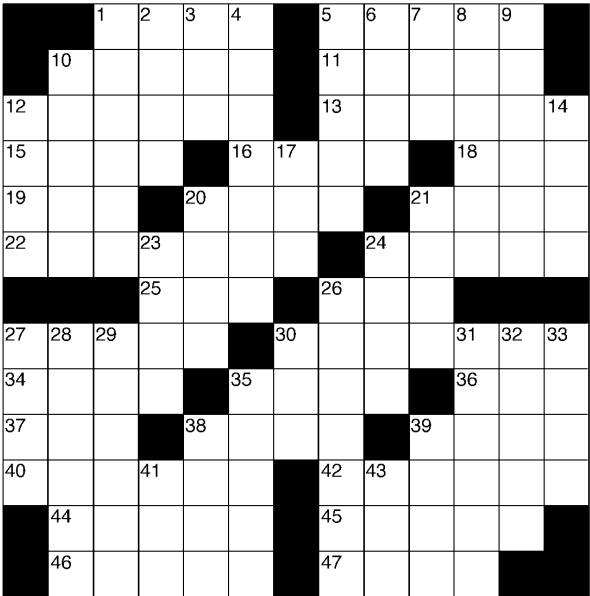
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
1 Boor
5 Pit
10 Muslim nymph
11 Small cabaret
12 Ambit
13 Llamalike animal
15 “Bus Stop” playwright
16 Tooth
18 Dry wine
19 Food and Drug Admin. (abbr.)
20 Palm liquor
21 Female
22 Abandoned
24 Middle
25 Off-track betting (abbr.)
26 Skittle
27 Tree
30 Hold
34 Bedouin headband cord
35 Son of Loki
36 Federal Housing Admin.

DOWN
1 Puma
2 Crescent-shaped figure
3 California base or fort
4 Vex
5 Damascus river
6 Red ocher
7 Dog sound
8 Blood stagnation
9 Discriminate
10 Broad arroyo

(abbr.)
37 Muslim fourth caliph
38 Ancient Britain
39 Bantu language
40 Polo stick
42 Mad
44 Demeter’s other name
45 Slayer of Caesar
46 Eng. poet
47 Molding

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
ADP SAVE SUFI
SAI ICAL ABLE
NBC MUSKETEEER
AMAS PARA
MAYOR PAON
AGUA TABU SAG
BEN CODEX TVA
IDE HARD CREW
GIDE FLECK
ARAB BIEN
ARCTIC DOG GAB
KAM 2 AYAH TAI
ALP fLETT HAD
12 Hit
14 Ironwood
17 Son of, in Arabic names
20 Pari-mutuel machine
21 Male side descendants
23 Lounge
24 Issue in a writ
26 Stoa
27 Madam
28 One of the Three Graces
29 Chin. commemorative gateway
30 Half-boot
31 Obliterate
32 Gilgit language
33 Welfare
35 Radioactive gas
38 Haw. goddess of fire
39 Actual being
41 Son of Shem
43 Bother



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BIG SKY BEATS



“Waterfalls” — TLC

“Waterfalls” was written by TLC band member Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes for TLC’s second album, “CrazySexyCool.” It is considered the group’s signature song and an international hit to boot, topping the charts in many different countries, including the U.S., New Zealand and Switzerland. BMG notes that it was the first No. 1 song ever to reference AIDS in one of its verses.

The music video for “Waterfalls” had a \$1 million budget and was an MTV staple at the time. It stayed on top of the MTV Video Monitor chart for over a month, making TLC the first music group to ever accomplish the feat. The video also won four MTV Video Music Awards in 1995, including Video of the Year making TLC the first Black band to ever receive the trophy.



BACK 40

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

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

Consider the Seed Potato

BY DOUG HARE

Where do home fries and hashbrowns, chips and French fries, gnocchi and mashed potatoes originate? You’ve probably never seen a packet of potato seeds for sale because potatoes don’t grow true to seed, like apples, they propagate vegetatively or asexually.

Every year, farmers have to plant small sprouting potatoes, or seed potatoes, in order to reproduce the specific varieties they want, of which there are over a thousand.

The Idaho Certified Seed Law prevents commercial potato growers from planting their own saved spuds, which have a higher probability of carrying disease. Instead, they’re required to purchase seed potatoes from certified seed potato growers to assure the health of their crop and the healthy proliferation of their specific varieties.

Seed potato management areas have special pest management measures and inspection and isolation requirements to assure plants are less exposed to diseases like blight and Potato Virus Y, or PVY. Commercial potato production is not allowed within seed potato management areas due to contamination risks.

Seed potatoes are tubers that are specifically grown to be free from disease, providing consistent and healthy yields when halved and replanted all across the country in warmer climates. The areas where seed potatoes can be grown are carefully selected from locations with cold, harsh winters that kill pests and mold spores, and warm summers with long sunshine hours and ample rainfall for optimal growth.

Chances are that the last loaded baked potato you ate had its origins in southern Idaho, a region that produces more seed potatoes than any other in the United States.

Nestled at the southern edge of the Yellowstone Caldera, the soil around Ashton, Idaho, is rich with volcanic ash and the altitude and snowpack help, providing a long winter deep freeze that cleanses the soil of mold spores and other pathogens.

Outside of Ashton in greater Fremont County lies the world’s largest seed potato farming area. Seed potatoes were not tried as a crop until 1920, but farmers quickly realized that their soil and climate conditions were ideal, similar to the Peruvian Andes where potatoes were first domesticated some 9,000 years ago. You might not get that impression driving through the quaint town of Ashton, but that’s because most of the action happens underground, off the beaten path with the scenic vistas, mountainous backdrops and the Henry’s Fork of the Snake River drawing the eye more than the endless, rolling, finely combed dirt fields fading into the distance.

On the first day of May, third-generation seed potato farmer Tom Howell is in downtown Ashton, where massive grain elevators tower over Main Street and an occasional freight train pulls directly into town for a grain refill. Many of the shops don’t look like they ever open for business.

Howell seems to make small talk with everyone who passes by on the sidewalk. It’s a small town with a population that hovers around 1,000. “Everybody knows each other ‘round here,” says Howell, as he pulls out his keys and opens one of the closed-up shops. Still, due to its geographic location near so many national parks and recreation areas, Ashton reports nearly 2 million visitors a year: sightseers, outdoorsmen and passers-though alike.

Letting me in, what looked like a thrift shop turns out to be a museum of sorts: Native American relics, souvenirs from the now-defunct Bear Gulch Ski Area, early 1900s newspaper articles about the American Dog Derby, WWII artifacts, and, of course, exhibits about the history of seed potato farming in southeastern Idaho are jam-packed into a space oozing with nostalgia. For a hardscrabble town founded in 1906, Ashton has acquired its fair share of history.

According to some dusty magazines on the counter, agriculture has always been the lifeblood of Ashton. Shortly after the first settlers arrived in the 1890s, several canals were developed to divert water from streams running off the Yellowstone Plateau and Teton Range. But soon, settlers discovered that some farmland, mostly to the east, is high enough and close enough to the Teton Range that crops can grow without irrigation due to increased rainfall making its way from a weather corridor extending to the Pacific coast.

After a brief tour, Howell tells me he has already sent the seed potatoes from his 1,500-acre farm to market, but he’s taking me up to Baum Farms to see the process of exporting certified disease-free seed potatoes—one of the busiest times of the year for farmers in the area. The regular growing season usually begins in mid-May, and harvesting starts mid-to late-September depending on soil temperatures.

On the ride out of town, Howell opens up, pointing out a new irrigation system and the names of all the farms we pass along the way. “Oh, we grow all kinds of potato varieties, but the farmers around here prefer to put Russet Burbanks on their own plates.” Although he worked in the ski industry in his younger years, Howell eventually returned to his roots as a third generation seed potato farmer and has been supporting his family since 1971, despite some years when the harvest barely paid the bills.

“For me, I enjoy the variety of tasks of seed potato farming. There is always something different to be doing,” Howell said as we pulled up to Baum Farms where a series of conveyors belts are moving an endless stream of seed potatoes through machines designed to remove rocks and other debris. “It’s really a family operation with my son and I doing most of the work until we hire migrant workers to help out during the busiest times of year.”

The inside of the cavernous potato cellar is a sight to behold, especially when filled with mountains of seed potatoes. The climate control system and ventilation apparatus are much more high-tech than the humble exterior of the cellar would suggest, but absolutely essential in keeping the crop from degrading during storage periods lasting up to a year.

The movement of seed potatoes from the cellar is nothing less than mesmerizing to watch. They travel through a series of conveyor belts, heavy machinery and a row of workers methodically picking out damaged and diseased specimens, past the watchful eyes of a state-certified inspector, and finally onto a truck filled to the brim with now-certified Idaho seed potatoes.

Driving home to Montana, after the hypnotic spell of thousands of dancing seed potatoes had worn off, I began to think about the how the seed potato farmers in Fremont County leave their old farming equipment in their fields on display as a salute to a bygone era—a museum exhibit in plain air.

While the technology of farming seed potatoes has visibly improved over the last century, so much about farming the humble seed potato remains the same. It offers a connection to the land, the dignity of a hard day’s work, continuity between generations of family members working the fields together and, at the end of the day, a delicious sustenance to help us persevere through the hard times. Pass the ketchup.



A team of seasonal workers inspects the crop for deformed, damaged and diseased specimens before they can be labeled as certified Idaho seed potatoes and shipped off to be planted at commercial potato farms around the country. PHOTO BY DOUG HARE

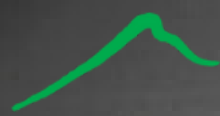


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Explore™

Big Sky

SPECIAL EDITION

SOUTHWEST MONTANA'S TOP 10 REAL ESTATE LISTINGS SUMMER 2020

Your Corner of Paradise

Real estate is thriving in southwest Montana and it's no wonder—with access to trails, world-class fishing, mountaineering and the Biggest Skiing in America, the lifestyle and solitude it offers is something we all crave. From snow-capped mountain views from the kitchen, to spacious wine cellars, to a post-hike hot tub soak within view of elk herds, each listing in our Top 10 affords something unique. Your new life awaits.

Featured: 112 Cobble Creek, Bozeman, MT

An exceptionally rare offering just four miles south of downtown Bozeman. Listed by Bryce Connery, a broker with PureWest Christie's representing Buyers and Sellers in premiere recreational and lifestyle properties throughout Montana. Read more about this listing on page 52.

1

800 Great Point Pass

Listed by Martha Johnson with The Big Sky Real Estate Co.

With inspiring vistas and 160 acres of timbered ridges and meadows, the measure of solitude and privacy on this property is unforgettable. The home was designed to be the ideal location for large family gatherings. Strategically positioned along the highest ridgeline of the property, this home takes full advantage of the 360-degree views of the surrounding Gallatin Mountain Range and Spanish Peaks. This home is equipped with custom details including a pizza room, full-service kitchen, custom bar with a saltwater fish tank, gaming area, wine cellar, elevator, lookout tower for coffee or cocktails and outdoor hot tub. Another special feature is the downstairs spa area with a sauna and large steam shower. All bedroom suites have private outdoor porch and patio and the master bedroom suite is equipped with an outdoor shower on the covered porch. Multiple ponds provide a private fishing and skating in the winter. Custom landscaping and construction allow this home to nestle into the natural surroundings as if it has been there generations, enhancing the feeling of a Montana dream home. Designed by Miller Roodell Architects and built by On Site Management.

Martha Johnson | 406.580.5891
martha@bigsky.com



2

1320 Old Toby

Listed by Cathy Gorman with Big Sky Sotheby's International Real Estate

This property is the absolute best of Montana. Built to stand the test of time by Dave Smith Construction and designed by architect Frank Cikan in 2001. Enjoy colossal Canadian red cedar, native Montana Chief Joseph rock and windows everywhere. Bordering National Forest land, the property offers peace, privacy and panoramic views of three majestic mountain ranges including Big Sky Resort. Enjoy a myriad of outdoor recreation—hunt, hike, ride, bike, four-wheel, cross-country ski or snowmobile right on the property. The exquisite 8,219-square-foot custom log home and 1,680-square-foot guest house include an expansive, welcoming great room with a massive rock fireplace that reaches two stories. The gourmet kitchen opens to the Spanish Peaks. The spacious master suite frames Lone Peak in each window. There are four en-suite guest rooms, a

family room and laundry on the lower level. The loft includes an office, bunk room, gym and storage. The three bed, two bath guest apartment sits above the three car garage. Never has a property as unique and rare as this 491-acre private estate been offered at a Montana ski resort. It will take your breath away with its windswept meadows and herds of elk moving in the shadows at the edge of the forest. Big Sky is a very special part of Montana. This offering, located in the heart of Big Sky, is a very special place. It is the most spectacular property I have ever represented in my 30 years as broker/owner at Big Sky Sotheby's International Realty.

Cathy Gorman | 406.580.2318 | cathy@bigskysir.com



3

Crazy Elk Ranch

Listed by Branif Scott with Fay Ranches

Just 29 miles north of Bozeman, the 3,731-acre Crazy Elk Ranch is nestled atop Horseshoe Hills in a private mixed and mature Douglas fir forest with views stretching as far as the eye can see of Bozeman's picturesque Gallatin Valley, the snowcapped Bridger Mountains and the Missouri River Valley from Three Forks all the way to Canyon Ferry Lake. Crazy Elk Ranch features a stunning 9,690-square-foot eight bedroom, nine bathroom dream home designed by Locati Architects and built by Schlauch Bottcher Construction. The main home is situated at 6,300 feet in elevation, allowing for magnificent panoramic views from sunup to sundown. Enjoy a cup of coffee on the deck while watching the sunrise and wildlife come alive or a glass of wine

in the hot tub as the sun slips below the mountains. This escape includes a rustic yet elegant 2,563-square-foot three bedroom, three bathroom guest home, perfectly sized barn for toys and gear, a cozy hunting cabin and a modest ranch manager's home. The striking improvements are only bested by the thousands of deeded acres to recreate on, already divided into 21 parcels. Located close to Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport, Crazy Elk Ranch is offered turnkey and is move-in ready for the next owner to begin their Montana adventure.

Branif Scott | 406.579.9599 | bscott@fayranches.com



4

786 Limestone

Listed by Bryce Connery with PureWest Christie's International Real Estate



This property is in a class of its own. A masterpiece of design, the home is a picture of timeless elegance with a touch of Western flair. The 40-acre parcel sits at the end of a private road and below a private drainage that backs up to National Forest, affording unequaled privacy and recreation only 10 minutes from downtown Bozeman. Built for entertaining, it has over 10,000 square feet of living space with four luxurious suites, more than 9,000 square feet of outdoor heated patio, multiple indoor and outdoor fireplaces, wine cellar, game room, sporting room and a gym. This is a remarkable offering in one of Bozeman's most coveted locations. Bryce Connery is a broker with PureWest Christie's representing buyers and sellers in premiere recreational and lifestyle properties throughout Montana. This home was designed by architect Terry Covin and built by TLC Builders.

Bryce Connery | 406.599.9158 | bryce@purewestmt.com



5

112 Cobble Creek

Listed by Bryce Connery with PureWest Christie’s International Real Estate

Just four miles south of downtown Bozeman, an exceptional property awaits. Watch elk graze in the hayfield and relax on the patio with spectacular views of the Bridgers, Gallatin Range and Spanish Peaks. Designed by acclaimed architect Stephen Dynia, this four bedroom, five bathroom, 6,296-square-foot legacy home sits on 17-plus acres and features an open floor plan and first floor master bedroom, two upstairs bedroom suites, an

office, movie theater, wet bar and wine cellar downstairs, plus a guest room and kitchenette above the garage. The outdoor living space, which includes a large deck, patio and a fireplace, is ideal for entertaining guests during those long Montana summer nights. An additional 20 acres is available.

Bryce Connery | 406.599.9158 | byrce@purewestmt.com



6

Gallatin Legacy Ranch

Listed by Regan Barranger with AmeriMont Real Estate



Gallatin Legacy Ranch is a unique ranch in southwest Montana. With over 3,244 deeded acres and 2.7 miles of East Gallatin River running across the property, this breathtaking land is bordered by thousands of acres of state land and conservation easements and offers unsurpassed views of the valley—all within 25 minutes of Bozeman. The Ranch is comprised of two large ranch holdings: the Lower Portion of 682 acres and the Upper Portion of 2,562 acres. A 5,000-square-foot custom home is located on the Lower Portion, along with four log guest cabins, a picnic area with teepees, historic homestead and a barnyard from 1867. For your outdoor enjoyment, included is a pistol gallery, five-stand sporting clays, a long range shooting area, one fully-stocked cutthroat trout pond with a swimming hole and sand bar, along with

world-class sporting opportunities including premium fly fishing and abundant game and fowl hunting. With no through access, the ranch provides end-of-the-road privacy and seclusion. Take off from your small runway for single-engine planes, or ride your horse across this most amazing outdoorsman’s paradise. Regan Barranger has been a Broker in the Gallatin Valley for over 14 years and is seventh generation Montanan. She is one of two owners of AmeriMont Real Estate and specializes in High-End Residential, Land and Ranch properties. Contact Regan for your Gallatin Valley real estate needs!

Regan Barranger | 406.539.5382 | regan@amerimont.com

7

Moose Ridge Condos

Listed by Martha Johnson with The Big Sky Real Estate Co.

These condos are a spot of brightness on the edge of town! The newly designed and refreshed Moose Ridge condos are all free standing with no shared walls and are outfitted with outdoor hot tubs, in-floor radiant heat, air conditioning and high-end kitchen appliances. Located on the sunny hillside overlooking the twinkling lights of Big Sky Town Center and long views of Yellowstone National Park. These are sun-filled light and bright condos with views of the sunset alpenglow over the mountains. Designed by Locati Architects, built by Yukon Construction and interior selections and finishes by Lucas Studios, this sophisticated team has created a beautiful, relaxed elegance, luxury home in a highly desirable location. Walking and biking distance to the bakery, restaurants, bars, shopping, ice skating, weekly summer concerts and farmers markets, close to the Nordic ski trail system and located on the hillside just out of the hustle and bustle for peace and tranquility. These condos are minutes to the Yellowstone Club, Spanish Peaks, Moonlight, Big Sky Resort and Gallatin River!

Martha Johnson | 406.580.5891 | martha@bigsky.com



8

Diamond A River Ranch

Listed by Scott Altman with The Big Sky Real Estate Co.



The Diamond A River Ranch is a world away but only minutes from Big Sky Town Center. Your own bridge across the scenic Gallatin River provides private access to a half mile of river frontage. 228 Altman Lane is a generational parcel that has a 5,500-square-foot main home on over 16 acres, as well as two additional 3-plus acre parcels for future development. Designed by Centre Sky Architecture, the house reflects the details of the mining era in an elegant surrounding. The builder repurposed a significant portion of the Gold Coin Mine that was disassembled in Anaconda, Montana throughout the house. It features a chef's kitchen with a pizza oven, four bedrooms including a magnificent bunk room, a trap door wine cellar and a 480-square-foot deck overlooking the river. Additional lots are platted and have a septic system located for future construction. A one of a kind opportunity that you must see for yourself. This property is owned by the listing agent.

Scott Altman | 406.468.3215 | scott@bigsky.com

9

Highlands Lot 1

Listed by Martha Johnson with The Big Sky Real Estate Co.

Highlands is a south-facing ski-in, ski-out neighborhood surrounded by old-growth pines and set atop a ridge overlooking the surrounding mountains, Yellowstone National Park, the Clubhouse and the Montage Hotel. Homes in Highlands are classic alpine design reimagined with clean, modern lines and open interior spaces creating warm and elegant ski chalets. Walking distance to skiing, golf, hiking, mountain biking, snow shoeing, cross-country skiing, alpine downhill skiing and the

Clubhouse, which includes dining, a bar, a pool, hot tubs and a health club. A golf or Ski Social membership is available with this property. The purchase of membership requires a deposit at Spanish Peaks Mountain Club required simultaneously at closing of real estate.

Martha Johnson | 406.580.5891 | martha@bigsky.com



10

Gallatin Preserve Tract 1

Listed by Martha Johnson with The Big Sky Real Estate Co.

This stunning 189-acre Gallatin Preserve tract has a 10-acre building envelope of which you can identify a 5-acre building site. The exterior aesthetic is complete with rolling meadows, old growth forests and views of the mountains that go on forever! Home to elk herds, moose, bears, deer and nesting cranes to name a few of mother nature's creatures, you won't be alone. The property hosts Spring Creek tributaries and the Southfork of the Westfork of the Gallatin River (one of the blue-ribbon trout streams

of the world). Gallatin Preserve is the best of both worlds as you have your ranch in Montana with privacy, views and access to the river, yet restaurants, shopping, a movie theater and grocery stores are just two miles down the road in the Big Sky Town Center and this property borders the Yellowstone Club! A Golf or Ski Social Membership at Spanish Peaks Mountain Club comes with each property but is not required.

Martha Johnson | 406.580.5891 | martha@bigsky.com



Community Pick: Gallatin Foothills Development

Listed by L&K Real Estate



Gallatin Foothills is the first single-family home neighborhood to be developed in Big Sky in over a decade. Residents will enjoy access to Terra Flow mountain biking trails and additional trails for hiking, mountain biking, four-wheeling, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing right from your back door.

The Gallatin Foothills neighborhood is situated in the canyon area of Big Sky, just a short drive to Town Center. Large lots with mature

trees provide privacy and a sense of seclusion. Each home site was hand selected and laid out to take advantage of sunrise and sunset, alpenglow and expansive mountain views.

Don't miss out on this rare opportunity for new construction and the ultimate mountain lifestyle living.

Ryan Kulesza | 406.539.4666 | ryan@lkrealestate.com





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61 CHIEF JOSEPH | \$1,750,000
#340582 | **DON PILOTTE**
Inviting home with log accents and a detached guest apt. A vaulted ceiling in the great room allows the home to be filled with sun creating an open feeling. Views of Lone Peak.



70 LUHN LANE | \$829,000
#341416 | **DON PILOTTE**
This warm and inviting home sits on the banks of the West Gallatin River, conveniently located between Big Sky and Spanish Creek near the northern portion of Gallatin Canyon.



179 BLACKTAIL BUCK DRIVE | \$675,000
#346938 | **KATIE MORRISON**
Meticulously maintained home with many upgrades overlooking Town Center. This 3 bd, 3 ba + loft end unit is part of the newer phase of Deer Run. Sold mostly furnished.



60 BIG SKY RESORT RD #10402 | \$635,000
#346481 | **KATIE MORRISON AND JAMIE ROBERTS**
Own one condo with three connected hotel rooms - all with a Lone Peak View: a studio suite w/ a murphy bed, a king jacuzzi suite, and a double queen room.




TIMBERLOFT DR LOT 22A | \$485,000
#206525 | **DON PILOTTE**
Outstanding forested parcel w/ views of Lone Mtn. Grassy meadows w/ forested building site. Additional acreage available up to 140± more acres. End of the road privacy!




LOT 122 SIXPOINT COURT | \$219,000
#345729 | **KATIE MORRISON AND JAMIE ROBERTS**
Located on a small cul-de-sac in the Antler Ridge neighborhood, this lot has a fantastic position across the street from the association open space which protects the mountain views.

DON PILOTTE BROKER, GRI, NCE, RRS, SFR 406.580.0155 | **ANDREW INCHES** SALES ASSOCIATE 406.581.6595 | **BRUCE WINTER** SALES ASSOCIATE, GRI 406.581.4658
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MICHAEL THOMAS | 406.581.2400



SHOSHONE CONDOMINIUM 1984 | \$525,000
• 2 bdrm | 3 bath | 1,312 +/- SF
• Corner, end unit location with Million Dollar Views and many amenities
• Immediate proximity to Mountain Village shops, restaurants, and chairlifts
LYNN MILLIGAN | 406.581.2848



135 SUMMIT VIEW DRIVE, LOT 8 | \$400,000
• 3.85 +/- acres
• Located in the exclusive Summit View community with proximity to Big Sky Resort
• Unparalleled views of Lone Mountain and old-growth trees for privacy
SANDY REVISKY | 406.539.6316

BIG SKY • MOONLIGHT BASIN • SPANISH PEAKS • YELLOWSTONE CLUB



CASCADE RIDGE 105 | \$2,995,000
• 6 bdrm | 7 bath | 4,354 +/- SF | attached, 2-car garage
• Owners have usage of the exclusive Cascade Ridge Lodge with pool, game room & more
• Exceptional ski-in/ski-out access with awe-inspiring mountain and valley views
SANDY REVISKY | 406.539.6316



SHOSHONE CONDOMINIUM 1981 | \$475,000
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• Top floor unit with brand-new appliances, kitchen cabinets, countertops, floors & fireplace
• Prime location in the Mountain Village next to shopping, restaurants, and chairlifts
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• 2.051 +/- acres | Stony Creek 5-lot Minor Sub
• Private lot ready for your new home with driveway and homesite excavation started
• Includes a set of architectural house plans and geotechnical report; well already in place
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