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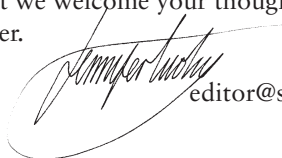
## contributors

A world of white is a challenging landscape for an English girl.

Having grown up in the damp, 49-foot-above-sea-level climate of London, I have found the transition to life in Idaho's mountains an exciting, sometimes terrifying one. From grappling with maneuvering a car in two feet of snow to my first alpine skiing experience (sent down Baldy on a pair of \$10 yard-sale planks), it has not been an entirely graceful adjustment. But adjusting I am, and recently discovering the joys of snowshoeing has helped rein in my fast-blossoming fear of the white stuff. There are few things as exhilarating to this city girl as creating my own path, albeit deep-footed and horizontal, through a field of pristine powder.

Within this issue of the *Sun Valley Guide*, the words "creating my own path" resound with meaning. Challenges abound in our isolated community and, only sometimes by design, the stories in this issue reflect how we have all created our own path through them. These range from the experiences of early flatlanders, such as Betty Bell—who digs up memories of Sun Valley Resort's early days in *Seventy Years of Sun, Snow and Stories*—to Greg Stahl's investigative piece addressing the trials and tribulations valley residents face today in this increasingly out-of-reach real estate market. But what emerges at the end, is that beyond the perceived hardships, this is a magical place to live. And we need to remind ourselves of that from time to time, perhaps with a walk through the pristine, white landscape that surrounds us.

This magazine also serves as a reminder. Overflowing with celebrations of and tales about our community, the *Sun Valley Guide* is your guide to life in the valley. Meet the family whose 50-year mission has been to feed you. Learn how to telemark in tandem down Baldy. Enjoy the company of one of the valley's best-kept celebrity secrets. And, as always, remember this is your magazine, and that we welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Have a great winter.



Jennifer Tuohy  
editor@sunvalleyguide.com

**Betty Bell**—Among the topics Betty is never asked to write about are art, music, entertainment, business, elections, matters of the school, immigration and any how-to kitchen thing. She enjoys writing about sports, and during the first hundred of her three hundred years in the Wood River Valley she did some of that. Though her grasp of sports has become ever more sketchy, she is particularly well suited to write about the good old days.



**Ed Cannady** has been traveling voraciously in the Sawtooth, White Cloud, and Boulder mountain backcountry since he moved to Idaho in 1973. Eighteen years ago, he landed his dream job as a backcountry ranger and is now the backcountry manager for the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Ed is an avid reader, photographer, skier, hiker, and mountain biker. The only thing he loves more than the backcountry is his wife, Teri. Ed and Teri live in Hailey.



**Paulette Phlipot** believes that we eat with our eyes. As a professional photographer with a passion for culinary arts, Paulette's main focus is food and beverage photography. She moved to the Wood River Valley after receiving top national awards in Canada and graduating from the Western Academy of Photography in Victoria, B.C. When she's not capturing the flavors of the Western states she is home celebrating the great tastes and healthy lifestyle of this community.



**Greg Stahl**—It was during a dark night in a dreary autumn drizzle that Greg Stahl grabbed a beer and slipped onto his neighbor's back porch. With the knowledge that no one really lived there, he uncovered the hot tub and had an evening soak. He was surrounded by huge, dark, empty condominiums, and he pondered how surreal it is to live among so many enormous homes that sit idle for most of the year. His investigation into local real estate and its effects on the community of the Wood River Valley appears on page 44.

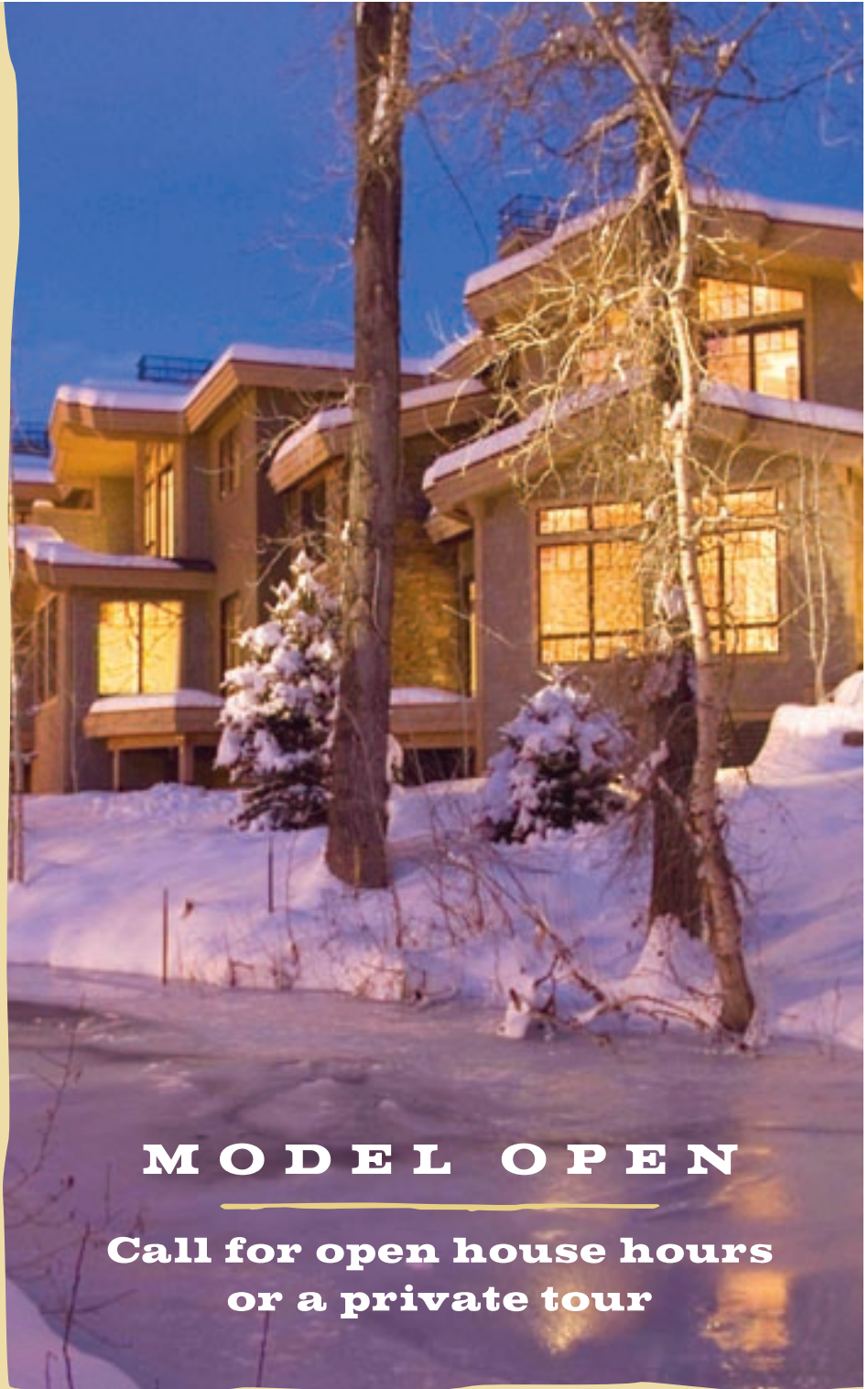




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1st place Photography, Chris Pilaro

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# Snow box bonanza

Rotarun's Snow Box Derby attracts kids of all ages

For five years, the Wood River Valley's minor-league Rotarun Ski Area, on Croy Creek Road west of Hailey, has been the site of some of the most creative and dazzling displays of sheer lunacy and fun.

The Snow Box Derby, a true mountain-town kind of event, is sponsored by the Blaine County Recreation District, Rotarun Ski Club, Ruscitto Latham Blanton Architecture, the Kiwanis Club and Smoky Mountain Pizza.

This year, the Sixth Annual Snow Box Derby is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 25.

Open to ages 5 and older, the derby offers multiple divisions in which to compete: Peewee, Junior, Teen, Adult and Professional. The only construction materials allowed are cardboard, paint, tape and glue, with detailing for purely visual effects encouraged. Wings, tails, teeth, towers—just about anything goes here.

"It's like the Rose Bowl parade, where you have to use flowers," said Dave Keir, BCRD recreation director. "After that, you can take it wherever you want. We've had racecars, floating islands, snow cats, Sponge Bob, the Red Baron and a Wicked Spud potato. The Hailey Coffee Company did a cup and saucer one year."

Mostly it's a fun outing for the family, a silly spectator sport and as much fun as you can have standing in the snow on a (small) mountain in Idaho.

"What's fun is watching the sleds do a yard sale all the way down. They just seem to disintegrate," Keir said with a laugh. "Wipeouts, the outfits and the funny hats are all fun. It's good, friendly competition. And the number-one thing is everyone goes home in one piece." Even if your snow box doesn't.

*Words by Dana DuGan*

*Photos by Willy Cook*



1



(1) Red Baron Jesse Forgeon zooms into history as the winner of The Most Creative Snow Box award. (2) It's every man for himself as teeth and claws are bared in this highly competitive derby. (3) Not displaying the usual grace of a Sun Valley Suns hockey player, John Stevens is unceremoniously dumped out of his pirate ship.



3





4



5



6



7

**(4)** This acrobatic contestant is more concerned with hanging on to his Gatorade than his snow box. **(5)** Team Alpine heads out for a smooth start, **(6)** which is more than can be said for Number 25. **(7)** This tough competitor is so sure of his prowess on the slopes of Rotarun that he has no need for goggles or a snow suit. **(8)** "Kids of all ages" is the Snow Box Derby's unofficial slogan, which Rus-citto Latham Blanton architect Michael Bull takes to heart when he volunteers to be the firm's driver for the day.



8



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THE ESSENTIAL

# White Clouds

From near hypothermia to pure joy, Ed Cannady's nine-day ski trek through the White Cloud Mountains last winter proved an intense reminder of what is truly important. Photos by Ed Cannady.

Pinned to a 10,600-foot pass by a relentlessly savage storm, it was starting to look like we had wanted this too badly. Descending to our intended camp was out of the question due to near-zero visibility and potential avalanche danger. We had to find a place on this narrow, exposed ridge to set up a tent or face hypothermia.

Although I had seriously questioned the wisdom of climbing the pass in the face of a major winter storm, this is exactly why we had come out here: to slip the reins of our sheltered existence and escape the envelope of comfort that so often breeds complacency. We had wanted to test our skills in the harsh vertical world of the winter mountains. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Here we find nature to be the circumstance that dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges, like a god, all men that come to her." Today was starting to look like judgment day.



**The morning sun** on the mountain peaks signals the end of the storm.  
**Left: Jeannie navigates** a treacherous slope in the White Clouds.



Jeannie goes down the rabbit hole.

The day had started out calmly enough. After being towed by snowmobile to Fourth of July Creek trailhead, high in the White Cloud Mountains, we started day one of our nine-day spring ski trip walking along the crest of the range. Weather had delayed the trip a week already, and we determined not to let it happen again, despite a less-than-ideal forecast. We were confident we could deal with whatever difficulties the weather and terrain threw at us.

We were an experienced group. Sean Peterson, who loves life as much and as well as anyone I know, had taken this route six times before; Jeannie Wall, the toughest among us, is an accomplished endurance athlete and has climbed big mountains all over the world. Scott Smith is cool and laid back, but highly skilled and tough as nails. I had done many extended ski trips, relying on strength and a bomber survival turn that could get me down any slope, although not necessarily with any grace. Above all, I knew these mountains.

Our packs were beastly, holding food, shelter and entertainment for nine days of high-altitude fun and exertion. But I was comfortable carrying my 80-plus-pound load. After all, this is the only addiction I have ever struggled with: carrying a heavy pack in steep country.



**"But for the sky, there are no fences facing."**

Scott contemplates the grandeur of Castle Peak, the White Clouds' highest peak.

Times like these are what we recall  
on our deathbeds rather than those  
accumulated material possessions,  
which, more often than not, end up  
possessing us in life.



On top of the pass, the wind was so fierce it was difficult to stand. Jeannie saw the need for quick action and began excavating a tent platform in the lee of a head-high rock, the only thing remotely resembling shelter on the exposed ridge. We made room for one tent and our packs by digging into the cornice adjacent to the rock.

Once the tent was set up—no small feat in the gale-force winds—we were able to settle in for a crowded but fun night of close companionship. Of course, we always hope for bluebird skies and great weather, but conditions like these provide the greatest adventure. And that is why we do this. If it was just for the skiing, we would ride the lifts on Bald Mountain and make more turns in a day than we would on this whole trip. But Baldy is comfortable, predictable and certain. On that ledge, we had to deal with the discomfort of four people crowded into a tent made for two, hovering on a small platform in intense winds. There was no ski patrol to tell us the slopes were safe, and no margin for error because we had no way to communicate with the outside world. We were relying totally on our ability to manage whatever circumstance we encountered. And we were comfortable with that.

The next afternoon, the storm continued unabated but after almost 24 hours in our cramped quarters, we were ready to make a move. After taking a close look at the snow pack and deciding it was safe, we skied slowly, carefully, deliberately, but almost blindly down to a protected site in the basin below, where we could set up both tents. The storm raged through the night, but we were sheltered and looking forward to the storm's silver lining: cold snow that would provide days of midwinter powder conditions.

Dawn broke cold as the storm finally withdrew its talons. I arose early for the photographer's light and watched as the clouds began to lift on the surrounding peaks. The scene was surreally beautiful and made the extra weight of a tripod, two lenses and 40 rolls of film seem more than worthwhile. In that moment, the light reminded me of how important shadows, fog and mist are to me as a metaphor for my life. I was raised in a fundamentalist family where everything was illuminated by the harsh overhead light of moral certainty. There was only black and white, right and wrong, no shadows, no room for uncertainty or reconsideration of closely held beliefs. As I matured, I saw that there is often more gray than either black or white. Certainty is a luxury we long for, but rarely have. What I hope for now is the clarity to see into the shadows.



Sean, Jeannie and Scott relax in the "Voodoo Lounge."



**Jeannie exults in** the sheer beauty and quiet of her surroundings.

Slowly, the mountain kingdom we had entered revealed itself. I have heard these mountains compared to a visual symphony; this, then, was an ocular *Ode To Joy*. Peaks towering to 10,000 and 11,000 feet ringed our camp and long, blissful runs in perfect powder awaited us. We had work to do.

We managed to exhaust ourselves, but not the available ski lines, as we explored the north-facing basin above our camp. Sean and Jeannie took the more daring lines while Scott and I skied more conservative runs that also provided the best opportunities for me to photograph the other two.

The next day we left our hard-won campsite and moved north into the next drainage, stopping along the way for some of the best runs of the trip from the shoulder of an 11,000-foot peak. We camped for two nights at a hidden lake nestled at the foot of more beautiful lines than we could ski in a week, reveling in the warmth of the sun. Sean and I used a floorless teepee tent beneath which we

excavated accommodations for four people to lounge and cook, and the two of us to sleep. It was luxurious shelter, elegant in its simplicity.

By day five, Scott and I, the ones with 9-to-5 jobs, needed some pure R&R. We kicked back in the sun on a huge granite slab atop a ridge while Sean and Jeannie kept charging at the sweet, deep snow and precipitous slopes.

I needed this. Beauty and quiet on this scale exist in few places on Earth. For me, there is nothing more restorative. I felt great. I felt small. I felt free. I felt alive. I was at peace. It brought to mind Dylan's line in *Mr. Tambourine Man*, "But for the sky, there are no fences facing."

The next day we moved camp again. Booting up a steep pass, we stormed the walls of another mountain fortress, guarded by sheer walls and wild snow. This was hard work, but what labor could be more rewarding? Times like these are what we recall on our deathbeds, rather than those accumulated material possessions, which, more often than not, end up possessing us in life.



Fabulous, warm, sunny weather brought easier living and also more variety in our skiing. Shady, north-facing slopes still provided exquisite powder, and the south slopes corned up nicely. This camp was home for the next four days, and its slopes provided some of the most exciting skiing of the trip, in steep narrow couloirs, as well as some of the longest runs near the tops of 11,000-plus-foot peaks.

We constructed a luxurious, snowy seating area that we called the “Voodoo Lounge.” It was here that we spent the warmest parts of the days, reading and singing along as Sean played the small guitar he carried. It is hard to imagine enjoying anything more. We ate well (Sean, a seasoned chef, did the cooking), played hard, spent hours in meaningful conversation and song, all the while immersed in a profound peace and staggering beauty that no artist could ever reproduce.

As we began our final day, leaving camp and heading for the last pass we had to cross—a narrow keyhole in an immense, otherwise impenetrable rock wall—we had no idea of the drama awaiting us. In retrospect, it was almost as if the mountains we had made love to for the previous eight days wanted to ensure we didn’t take them for granted.

Climbing the south side of the pass, we noticed clouds moving in from the north, but they appeared to be high and of little concern. When we reached the top, we found a boxcar-sized cornice and a thick cloud blanket welling up from the valley floor, blocking the slot that was our passage back to civilization. Lost in the cloud below was our route, a thousand feet of up to 45-degree slope, broken by rock and cliff bands that we could not see. We had no choice. While I can honestly say I never felt real fear on this trip, I did have moments of what I call “considerable concern.” This was one of those moments.

Jeannie went to work immediately, digging a platform on the left side of the narrow defile we stood in, where the cornice was thinnest. Next, she climbed down the face of the cornice to build another landing where we could lower our packs. Then, one at a time, we climbed down to this tiny pad, shouldered our packs and side-slipped the steep slope, able to see at most 30 to 40 feet below. When we finally emerged from the dense cloud, the light was still as flat as a campaign promise. We descended the long drainage to the road in isothermic snow, which became increasingly unpredictable, causing me to break through and pitch head first several times. But even these unceremonious face plants could not wipe the smile from my face.

And then it was over. We had spent nine days with only the essentials, save for my camera, Sean’s guitar and a little chocolate and rum. Yet, they were the fullest of days, and we had lacked nothing we really needed. There is something about being stripped of the clutter of modern life, where wants are hard to discern from needs, that reminds me of what is truly important.

No, we had not wanted this too badly, but I had needed it more than anything else in the world. ❄️



Sean drops in for another perfect run.

While I can honestly say I never felt real fear on this trip, I did have moments of what I call “considerable concern.”

This was one of those moments.



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RECORDS THE REFLECTIONS  
OF SOME OF ITS "CHILDREN."



**W**hen I sat down to begin this reminiscence, I looked for a handle, something to latch onto. Did I see Sun Valley as an “It?” Or a “Place?” Or as “Us?” What worked was “edifice,” and I’ll use it as a metaphor, even though I bet it loses integrity along the way. With edifice I got a clear picture of cornerstones, solid things to dust off, look at closely and read the names inscribed. *The following characters were part of Sun Valley’s post-war history, occupying it roughly from the late ’40s to the early ’50s.*

◆ General Manager W.P. “Pappy” Rogers—a big man in every way, fiery but warm, demanding but appreciative, wholly hands-on always, a greeter of nearly every incoming bus and the rider of many a Shoshone-bound bus when it snaked its way through the snowplowed canyon the highway often became. Abundant snowfalls were common then.

◆ Florence “Flo” Law, executive assistant. Most of us suspected she was co-general manager, the lady who could smooth everything out. For example, when Mr. Rogers’ softball team would get whumped by Nedder’s team, my future husband’s team (Ned Bell was manager of the employees’ cafeteria as well as the famous BoilerRoom), Mr. Rogers would find him even though Ned had put some effort into not being a highly visible target. Mr. Rogers would summarily fire him, tell him to get to Personnel and pick up his train ticket back to York, Nebraska—and “don’t miss that five o’clock bus to Shoshone!” But after an hour or two of cooling-off time that likely included a chat with Mrs. Law, he’d seek out Ned again, de-fire him, and tell him never mind about the bus.

◆ Eddie Seagle, chief engineer. The man who made things work down here in the valley and up on the mountain, and a man

of many skills. In a time of barely intermittent radio—forget TV—every blue-sky, aspen-gold fall, he’d spool out a par five’s worth of wire in and around the Opera House and splice them magically to pull in a silken voiced sportscaster who—to a captivated audience ranging from bellhop to the big man himself—artfully chanted the World Series play by play. I never saw games with more clarity than those.

◆ Dr. John Moritz, pioneer bone man. In a time of novel new ways to break a leg, Dr. Moritz was a national innovator of procedures, plus being an all-round physician—deliverer of my first two children in the wing on the third floor of the Lodge that served as a hospital until a real one was built. So beloved and respected was Dr. Moritz that we gave our new hospital his name.

◆ Bald Mountain has to be acknowledged here...dear Baldy, our Accessory Dwelling Unit, our immovable, incomparable force.

I arrived in 1946, early enough to be linked to the cornerstones—a flatlander come from Nebraska to learn to ski. There’s a major chunk of time when I lost touch entirely with the world beyond, a long run of focusing on getting to the mountain and riding free up the three single-chair lifts—River Run, Exhibition and Ridge, and I was smug if not snug in my hot-gear garb of three sweaters under a nylon shell. I survived those rides by cocooning in the big, canvas-wool-lined cape that lift attendants draped across every skier’s shoulders. When I skied off on top I’d be warm again, ready for more play in the snow, ready to bag as many as I could of the elusive nano-seconds of bliss and perfection.

My first summer in Sun Valley, the one that hadn’t been a part of my plan, I discovered that hiking wasn’t necessarily horizontal, and that I could always do it in a National Geographic setting...I discovered that golf was a

new game to play but a hard thing to learn on nine skinny fairways. Luckily there were plenty of hit-once-and-lost-forever Titleists sliced into the big-time rough to offer free pickings and make the twenty-dollar season pass seem not too steep. I stayed several summers to be positioned for winter before it sank in that I was home.

Four fellow “first coursers” shared the tales that follow. Just between us, I was taken aback to see how much they’ve aged. As young things, we’d all linked up to the cornerstones about the same time and jointly raised our kids who’ve had kids who’re raising kids now linked.

On this its ...us ...our—seventieth birthday, I think it’s OK to say ‘Happy birthday, Mom.’ ◆



**Then and now:** Betty Bell, top, in her airborne racing days. Today, weaving her magic words in her corner at the Idaho Mountain Express office in Ketchum.



**“IF YOU LIVE HERE, YOU SKI.  
GET ON THAT MOUNTAIN. YOU  
HAVE TO BE ABLE TO TALK  
TO GUESTS ABOUT SKIING.”**

“... WHEN WE CAME DOWN  
TIMMERMAN HILL AND SAW  
THE MOUNTAINS, I KNEW THIS  
WAS WHERE I WANTED TO BE.”

## MARYLOU SIMPSON

**I**t was a standard address to the troops: “If you live here, you ski. Get on that mountain. You have to be able to talk to guests about skiing.”

Marylou Simpson can't pinpoint the first time she heard Mr. Rogers, the general manager, preach this sermon, and since she was already a skier, she embraced it as gospel.

Unlike many employees who hailed from Union Pacific headquarters in Omaha, Marylou wasn't a flatlander. The train she arrived on in Shoshone hadn't come from Omaha, and she didn't have the railroad pass that was part of the package for employees. She didn't even have a job. When she and two good friends stepped off into that hot first day of July in 1946, they had stubs for one-way tickets from Seattle—\$20 each, coach.

“It was so flat...so dusty. I said, ‘What have we got ourselves into?’ But then we got on the bus, and when we came down Timmerman Hill and saw the mountains, I knew this was where I wanted to be.” The girls came to Sun Valley at the urging of Jack Simpson, a young sailor on leave they'd met in Seattle. Jack's family had settled in Ketchum long before Mr. Harriman discovered it. Owen, Jack's father, owned what had first been the Lewis/Lemon Grocery Store before becoming Simpson's Grocery—a grand old building that then morphed into the Golden Rule grocery store before morphing through short-lived morphs I've forgotten into its present reincarnation—Iconoclast Books. Before the war, Jack's job had been to drive the store's truck over Galena Summit on the “wagon trail” and deliver groceries



**Then and now:** Marylou Simpson, still smiling. Her husband, Jack (pictured bottom right at Ketchum's Wagon Days Parade), passed away in 2000.

in Stanley and Clayton.

Through Jack, that first summer, the girls found jobs as cocktail waitresses in another of Owen's enterprises, the Sawtooth Club. The ladies were a big hit.

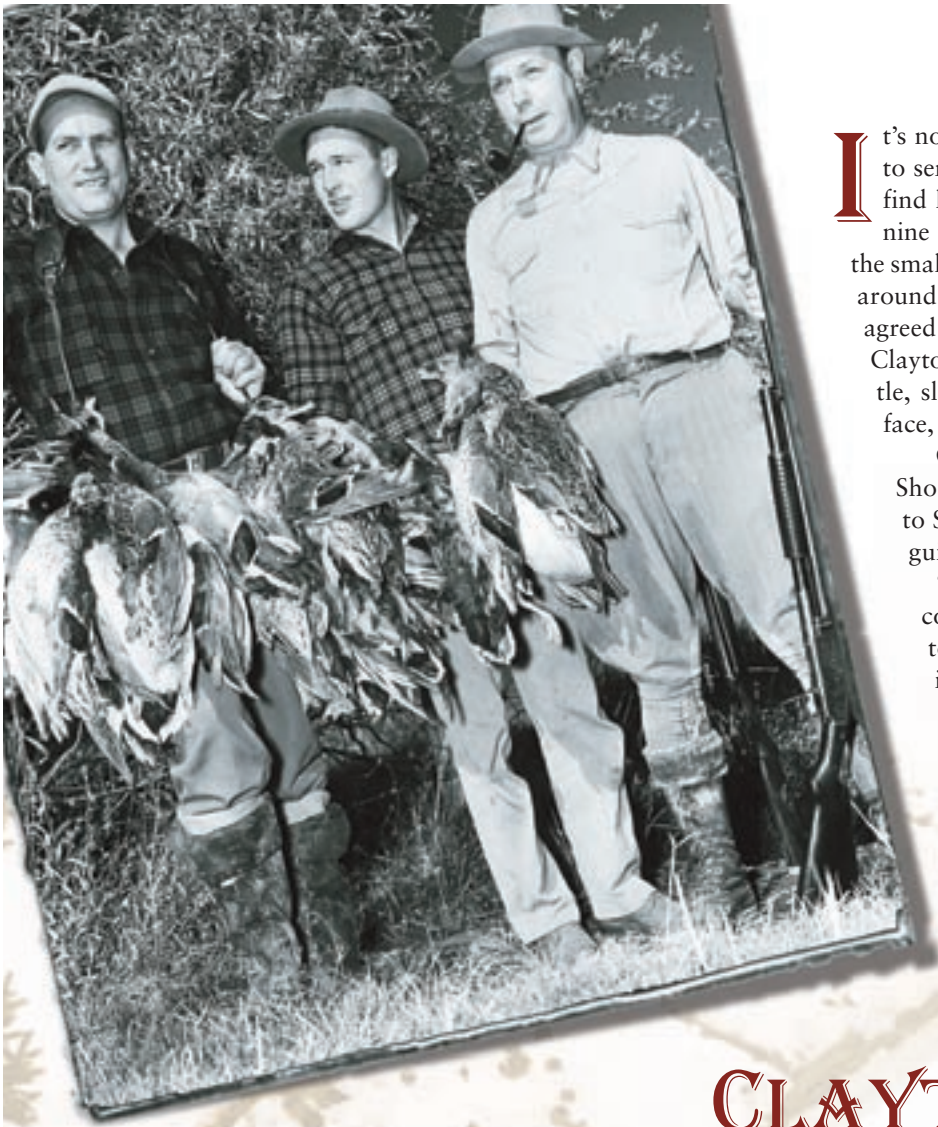
“There wasn't a single gal in town,” Marylou said. “The Navy, when it cleared out of Sun Valley, corralled them all.”

One of Marylou's first Sun Valley jobs was at the warming hut on top of Baldy, where she was cashier.

“I was the only one they'd let ski down with the money after work,” she said. Most employees, though eager to follow Mr. Rogers' commandment, were still bunnies not to be counted on to get down the mountain with the money sack intact.

Surprise: Marylou married Jack. Jack, who died in 2000, was instrumental in launching the Sun Valley junior ski racing program that's so solid today, and through the years the Simpsons and their sons Mike and Pat were entwined in Sun Valley's ski history—Pat once won the National Junior Championships.

When Jack was 16, he skied for Sonja Henie in the movie *Sun Valley Serenade*. He skied all of the spectacular runs and cartwheeled through all of the spectacular crashes—but at the end of every crash the camera clicked off and didn't click on again until it was back on a Hollywood set and zeroed in on Miss Henie wiping ersatz snow from her face. She never set foot in Sun Valley, poor thing—and Jack never shook his nickname—“Sonja.” ♦



It's not likely you'd be looking for Clayton Stewart to serve him a subpoena, but should you be, you'd find him in Atkinsons' Market in Ketchum, about nine on most mornings. He'd be sitting at one of the small front tables, back-lit by the sun with his hand around a cup of coffee. I didn't have a subpoena; he'd agreed to chat when I found him there. I said, "Hi Clayton," and he looked up and turned loose a gentle, slow-motion smile that spread clear across his face, and I thought, "I remember that smile..."

Clayton, an Idahoan, graduated from Shoshone High School in 1937 and came directly to Sun Valley. He already had a job—as a fishing guide. He was 16.

"Did you guide any celebrities?" I asked, not commenting about his tender age. "Well...I took Gary Cooper fishing that summer...then in '38 Hemingway was here, and I was his hunting guide. I did a lot of guiding for Hemingway—he loved to kill things—I didn't know there were people who just like to kill things, but there are."

Along with a few million others, I've fixed Hemingway close to the top of my favorite authors, so when Clayton got even more specific I interrupted. "Did you guide any other celebrities?"

## CLAYTON STEWART

"Oh yeah...what's his name? You know...the guy with the big ears?" We sat there stewing a bit as is the wont of those of us advanced in far-ranging wisdom but challenged if we have to summon a specific name from our vast collections. Surprisingly, a name did float out—"Clark Gable?"

"Yep. That's the one—I did a lot of fishing with Clark Gable."

Clayton's resume lists more than traipsing around country he loved and getting paid for it. In the early '40s he managed the State Liquor Department in Sun Valley. "You mean the liquor store?"... "No, the State Liquor Department," he corrected. "Nobody drank anything but bourbon and gin until guests started coming from back East—and they had a taste for vodka and such. And wine—we didn't know anything about wine, so Sun Valley brought in a wine steward from Austria, Peter Riehl, I think it was, and they built a wine vault in the Lodge basement—buried it there—and then they made darn sure to hide the key so employees—most of them teenagers, couldn't get hold of it."

In his stint as transportation manager, it wasn't only getting guests in and out of the valley he had to worry about, "There was all that laundry."

"Laundry?"

"Yeah—we had to ship out all the linen to UP headquarters in Pocatello and get it done there...we'd get it all separated—sheets, pillowcases, towels, all that stuff. Sometimes we'd fill up a couple cars." Railroad cars, he clarified—not Subarus.

Clayton, 89 now, still lives in Ketchum. Once in a while on a fine summer day when it's too busy here, he drives south to familiar and cherished country around Hagerman. He doesn't take a rod or gun with him these days, nor do I imagine that he hankers to—he's already lived the best of it. ♦



**Then and now:** Clayton Stewart, top center, hunted and fished with a myriad of Hollywood celebrities. Today, he is happy to fish in solitude along the Big Wood River.

I've had a few titles, but never "shrinking violet." So when I called Petra and said I'd like to hear a couple of recollections from her early days in Sun Valley, I wasn't put off when she tried to steer me away: "You should talk to Earl McCoy—he was one of our best early skiers—he won that Diamond Sun race straight down Baldy."

"Well, I'd really like to talk to *you*."

"And Gladys McAtee—Val McAtee's widow. Val, worked for Sun Valley for a lot of years, and Gladys has wonderful stories—she's in her nineties now, but really sharp."

"Uh huh—but I'd really like to talk to *you*."

And Petra, the same courteous woman I remember from the late '40s when she worked in Sun Valley's personnel department, gave in, and invited me to her place—which is what I'd been angling for all along. I'd been to Petra's home once before, and I was curious to see if I'd still think she sits atop the best piece of real estate in all of the Wood River Valley. I do. She does.

Petra's piece of real estate, where she lived with her husband, Frank, until he died in 1994, is a roomy knoll on the north side of Weyakkin—earlier that whole spread had been the Farnlun Place, owned by Petra's grandparents,



## PETRA MORRISON

who came to Ketchum in 1895. Just after you drive into Weyakkin, a road on the left still signed Farnlun Place winds gradually up and around to Petra's knoll, and the panorama there swings from beyond Hailey south to beyond Galena north.

At the dining room table with a window-wall featuring Baldy, I asked Petra what it was like when construction started in Sun Valley. "Oh, it was a big impact right away. I was going to a two-story brick school in the middle of the block where Giacobbi Square is now. School was just two rooms downstairs—upstairs was the gym. When construction started and families began to move in, right away school became four rooms—and with four teachers, too!"

"Was there friction with all the new kids?"

"No, no. Right away, we were close. They fit right in.

"There weren't many buildings that first winter, and all the construction workers lived in tents—they built them on platforms with kind of walled sides and they had stoves in there—whole families lived in tents. I was shocked—our house was small, but it had electricity—but not indoor plumbing—and it sure seemed like a castle alongside those tents."

I asked Petra to tell me about one memorable "little thing." "Well," she said, "the Personnel Department was right down the hall from Mr. Rogers' office, and if it was getting close to Christmas and we still didn't have any snow or not enough, Mr. Rogers would come stomping down the hall and just boom out, 'Everybody get on over to church—pray for snow! We need snow!'"

"And I'd think, '*Really...*' But the funny thing was, it always seemed to work." ❧



**Then and now:** Petra Morrison relaxes atop a rock at Alturas Lake, and atop a knoll overlooking her family's former property.

**Then** photos, courtesy Sun Valley Company archives. **Now** photos by Rachael Anne Waring.

# Guides

Their license plate numbers read in the triple digits, which means they've been driving in this town since before most of us had even heard of it. They live at opposite ends of the valley, and their paths rarely cross. Yet each of these couples thrives in their niche, shaping the community with strong character and a commitment to their vision of the Wood River Valley. In the second of our Sun Valley Guides series, let them guide you through their slices of valley life. Words by **Betsy Andrews**. Photos by **Paulette Philipot**.





“A true friend is one that asks only what you can give,” says Alice Scherthanner, offering me cookies, lunch, orange tea and fresh basil (clipped from a pot she has just brought indoors because of the September frost). She does not offer me one of the ripe tomatoes. Alice is speaking of individuals, but it’s a mantra that extends to her 44-year relationship with the Wood River Valley.

Alice ran the Sun Valley Children’s Ski School for almost 30 years. She’s taught three generations of locals

and guests, and she’s like the no-nonsense, old-fashioned mother you hear about and, if you were lucky, that you had. She is sure of her boundaries, confident of her take on the world, irritated that her husband, Andy, is out changing a tire on the horse trailer because not only is he avoiding me but he’s heading out for a ride. It’s Wednesday, it’s Alice’s day to ride that horse (they have three), and she doesn’t know where he plans to go, or when he plans to return.

Andy taught skiing on Bald Mountain, Sun Valley’s premier area of vertical runs, for 40 winters, retiring three years ago. He is 77, Alice is 68, and the couple still lives in a home they dug a foundation for and erected in 1962 on the hillside a mile east of the base of the Warm Springs ski lifts. The house is surrounded by acres of undeveloped sagebrush, and beyond that, homes that have seen better days, which they rent to what seems like half the young workforce of Ketchum. Everything else that is not public land has evolved from economical ski shacks to million-dollar properties.

Alice fiercely guards the old world: the Scherthanner land would make them a fortune—if they sold it. They do not plan to do so. “What do we need a fortune for?” said Alice. The acres of blooming sagebrush are a feast for the eye; they seem a tiny holding, frozen in time, protected only as long as Alice and Andy fight for them.

The two have truly realized the ski town dream, arriving during Sun Valley’s heyday, skiing for a living, building a home and raising six children. What does it take to follow that dream? Sticking to it, according to Alice, and not squandering what you’ve got. “If you are cheap, and you don’t go out, and you don’t give too much away and you don’t have

fancy clothes, then you have a chance. It’s not what you make, it’s what you do with what you make.” She looks at me pointedly and I wonder if I really needed the new pair of Merrells.

Alice is beyond caring what strangers think of her. She shakes her head, remembering some gossip from years past. “I’ve

## Alice & Andy Scherthanner

heard about the few different affairs I’ve had,” she laughs. “Three, I think. It was news to me.”

Alice and Andy met in Maine, where she had grown up, and where he had emigrated from Austria to teach skiing at Sugarloaf Mountain. In 1959, he was sent to Lewiston, Idaho, while working for a New York company that sold paper and trade journals. One weekend, he drove to Sun Valley. As he tells it, he stopped on what used to be an airstrip up on the north Big Wood River, looked toward Baldy and said, “This is the place I want to live.”

He bought some land, but then he and Alice moved to California. Alice hated it. “I felt totally fat and obnoxious there,” she recalls. She described her neighbors: idle, discontented housewives drinking through the day and offering their stolid New England acquaintance recreational sedatives. When Andy found a building crew to frame a house on their Idaho land and asked if she could be ready to leave the next day, she said, “I’m already ready.”

Today, many of the Scherthanners’ Sun Valley friends have moved away. The couple is cynical about Ketchum’s future, having attended “more town council meetings,” and having dealt with corporations looking to develop their corner of sagebrush. A neighbor recently called asking her to clean up her corral because he’d put his home on the market. “But what if we did, and then the person who bought the house found out that we just keep our corral messy?” she asks. This stubborn “take me as I am” attitude has played an important role in making her dream come true. It’s their dream. And in it, there is a messy corral. ■

Long and lanky, Andy Munter reclines in a chair as though immobility were his natural state. Janet Kellam, his wife, leans forward intently, one hand busy with a chew stick so their new pound puppy, Willie, a slender Australian shepherd, will chew on it instead of the furniture.

## Janet Kellam & Andy Munter

Munter's lassitude is deceptive: His idea of relaxation is hiking into the mountains on skis with Kellam, where the couple spends hundreds of hours annually "just poking around." In the summer, they paddle rafts and kayaks down some of Idaho's most beautiful rivers.

Both understand the symbiosis of organisms and environment: It gives to you, and you give back. As president of the board of Idaho Rivers United and director of the Sawtooth Forest Avalanche Center, respectively, Munter and Kellam have taken their love of the Idaho outdoors several steps further than most.

Kellam has been buried in an avalanche, but the reminders of mortality the environment has sent her way haven't dampened her enthusiasm for the backcountry. Instead, she has made a career out of promoting safe use of Idaho's wilderness. "One of my favorite classes to teach is a women's avalanche program; it's about encouraging them to go out and participate in the decision-making," she said. This year, her influence will extend nationwide as she takes on a new role as president of the board of the American Avalanche Association.

Thirty years ago, Kellam had never been in Idaho. As a student at Middlebury College in Vermont, she was offered a job with Forest Service fisheries biologists in Stanley. Before accepting, she studied a map. "I saw that it was this place with almost no roads. I called him back immediately and asked, 'Can I have the job?' I kept coming back for summer jobs. I knew

it was home." By 1980, she was a full-time Idahoan, skiing on the U.S. Nordic C Team until her discovery of the backcountry marked "the demise of my race career."

A native Minnesotan, Munter arrived in 1977 from Duluth, where he'd co-managed a ski shop. "I wanted to come to the best ski resort in the West," he recalled. "I knew I was employable, and I came for one year." Now, he's most recognizable as the face of

Backwoods Mountain Sports, which he bought from its founder, Bill Wood, in 1983. Fifteen years ago, Munter joined Idaho Rivers United, a statewide non-profit river conservation organization. The group's agenda includes the Wood River Legacy Project, dedicated to restoring the lower third of the Big Wood to a living river. "I wanted to give something back (in return) for this sense of the wilds that the river has given to me, especially after the experiences I shared while learning to kayak with my son, Henry."

Munter is hopeful about the future of the Big Wood River. "A lot of exciting coalitions between irrigators and conservationists are being formed. Water is a huge issue especially in the West, and we hope to help in a little way. We're working toward a win-win situation."

Both Munter and Kellam realize that conserving the wild parts of Idaho lies in education and compromise. "The reason I fell in love with Sun Valley is the mountains and rivers and the people," said Kellam. "I have spent significant amounts of time in other communities, and this is a fabulous community."

"I just have to ditto that," agreed Munter. "There are issues, of course: economic diversity, growth, the highway, there's no end of things. But there's also no end of people trying to make things better. There are wonderful people, not just who live here, but who visit here. I can't really imagine a better place to live. It's still a real community. And there are enough models out there that we can take advantage of their mistakes, and their triumphs." ■





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I feel Hailey now is the same way.  
It’s very safe.  
It’s a little microcosm of everything that’s good.”



As the youngest children in large families, Melanie and Jeff Nevins both thrive on working with diverse yet like-minded folks toward common goals. This sometimes means waking up to 30 jousting in medieval garb traipsing about their ranch. “It’s really fun to look over your coffee in the morning and there’s this guy in armor,” said Melanie, who has become an integral part of the Sun Valley Renaissance Faire. She hadn’t even heard of it a few years ago, until an organizer saw her with her son, Jordon, who was dressed in Renaissance garb. “We’ll be there!” Melanie assured her. “Can I bring my miniature ponies?”

That’s a typical response for the energetic owner of Silver Bell Ranch in Hailey. A working ranch, Silver Bell buys “green” horses from Germany and Holland, which employees train for dressage.

Despite the rewarding work, Melanie thrives on giving. She praises the easy access to philanthropic causes in the Wood River Valley. “You can make a difference in a small community.”

Her husband, Jeff, uses the same words—“make a difference”—when he speaks of his work as chief of operations for Wood River Fire and Rescue. In addition to overseeing a full-time staff of 10 and a part-time staff of 40, he goes out on many calls, staunchly supporting his crew. “We have such good people. We try to create an atmosphere where people feel valued, that their opinions count.” His volunteers include doctors, construction workers and river guides. “I love the fire service community. It’s sort of a national brotherhood—” he struggles to find the right word, not wanting to exclude women. “Community? But that doesn’t have the same feel, the feel of family.”

Melanie was a firefighter, too, for six years, giving it up only when she became pregnant with Jordon, now 13. “The best part is the camaraderie,” she said. “There’s not anything like driving down Main Street in a fire engine, and you’ve got the sirens on and you’re with your friends. Or you’ve got your Christmas dress crammed in your turnouts and you know you missed Christmas dinner but

you know you made a difference.”

Originally from Southern California, Melanie moved to Idaho in 1979 after a friend called and offered her a job. “My car had been broken into two times and my apartment broken into once in the past six months,” she recalled. “I moved up in two days.” Jeff had arrived a year

## Melanie & Jeff Nevins

earlier, to spend one winter. He stayed, joining the Sun Valley Fire Department in 1984, and never looked back. “It just got in my blood, the firefighting.”

The couple moved from Ketchum to Hailey nine years ago. “Ketchum used to be a wonderful small town with a lot of diversity, lifestyles, economic levels,” said Melanie. “It was one group, and it was really rewarding to be a part of. I feel Hailey now is the same way. It’s very safe. It’s a little microcosm of everything that’s good. In Hailey,” she continued, “the pace is slower.” Jeff nods in agreement. “I love Hailey for its value system.”

But the two don’t kid themselves—they recognize that Central Idaho presents a homogeneous environment that can repress a creative soul. They consider travel a fundamental part of raising their son, reinforcing the value of diversity. In a town that places more value on how many pairs of skis you have than how many instruments you play, Jordon plays the mandolin, flute and piano.

Melanie envisions the Sun Valley Renaissance Faire becoming grander. Jeff holds great hope for the future of the community’s fire services. “There are a lot of positive things going on,” he said, in spite of the struggle to stretch resources for a growing population. They realize that neither will happen by themselves. Getting in there and working together is everything.

In the background, Jordon plays Led Zeppelin’s *Stairway to Heaven*. At one point, he looks expectantly at his father. Jeff smiles. “That’s where I usually start to sing.” 🎸

# 50 years



**All in the family:** While the fourth generation of Atkinsons' grocers, Peter (left), Morgan (center) and Jon (right), have yet to venture into the realm of business, co-owners Whit and Chip (center back from left), with the help of their wives, Susie (left) and Monica, are proudly carrying on the tradition started by their grandfather Chuck in 1956.

# of family



Through five decades and three generations, Atkinsons' Market has outlasted competitors large and small to become Ketchum's sole surviving grocery store. **Rebecca Meany** talks with the family and employees to discover the secrets of this Wood River Valley institution's success. Photos by **David N. Seelig**.

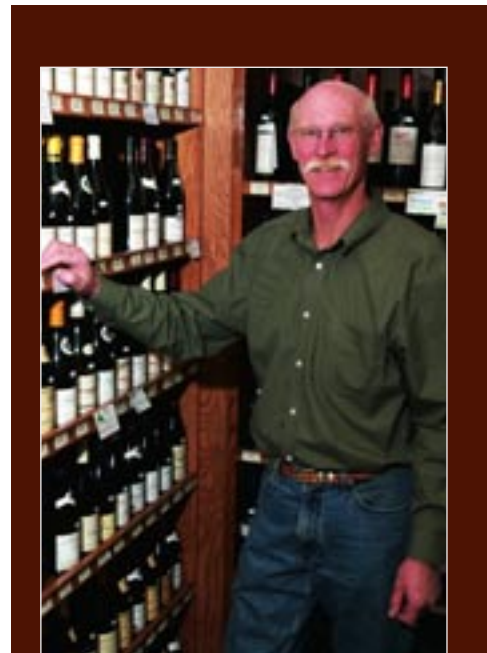
**T**om Pyle looked out his second-floor office window and caught a glimpse of his past. The general manager of Atkinsons' Market quickly sized up the scene below: customers prodding produce, checkers moving items over scanners, baggers sending groceries out the door—not too bad for a late-summer afternoon.

Pyle's mind works fast—not surprisingly, as he has worked in the business, exclusively at Atkinsons', for more than 30 years. "I did the same thing then that I'm doing today," he said. "Stocking, carryout. Now we have 250 employees, and I expect them to do the same thing they did when they started: customer service. When it's busy, I don't care what your position is, you're here for the people."

Once in a while, the activity takes him back to his early days with the store: mountains of glass bottles that needed sorting, a giant cooler that needed restocking, people's armfuls of groceries that needed relieving. Never did it occur to him that he would still be an Atkinsons' employee into the next century. Never did it occur to many shoppers that the market, too, would last that long.

## In the beginning

Charles "Chuck" Atkinson managed a little general store in 1930s Picabo, a tiny town southeast of Ketchum. He and his wife, Floss (Flossie), had moved from Chicago to Idaho to be closer to Flossie's parents in Pocatello. Atkinson initially found work building the new resort in Sun Valley and later owned a small combination grocery store and gas station in Picabo. In 1942, the Kilpatrick family, who owned Picabo's general store, recruited Atkinson to run it.



**General Manager Tom Pyle** has worked for Atkinsons' Market for more than 30 years. "It was seriously like a family in here," he said. "(Don and Stan) had respect for you. They worked right alongside us. They were great people." The current owners, Don's sons, Chip and Whit, engender the same sense of respect and cooperation, Pyle said, leading him to stay with the company into the 21st century.



PHOTO COURTESY THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY, REGIONAL HISTORY DEPARTMENT

**The Sun Valley Shopping Center** contained the first Atkinsons' Market. Defying expectations about its potential for success, and its ominous opening day of Friday, July 13, 1956, the store is still going strong 50 years later.



**A shopper peruses the selection of meats** at Atkinsons' in Giacobbi Square, 1969. Current meat manager, Mike Woodall, says the store keeps a steady supply of specialty meats and cheeses to satisfy the wishes of the chefs, organic aficionados and international clientele who shop there.

**I**n the mid-fifties, the Kilpatricks decided to close the store and divvy up their holdings. Determined to stay in the business, Chuck enlisted help from George and Peggy Kneeland and one of the Kilpatrick brothers (“He had always really liked my grandfather,” said Chip Atkinson) to purchase the Christiania, a former gambling casino in Ketchum. Poker tables, sitting idle since a state prohibition on gambling in 1953, were moved aside in favor of cash registers, and the first Atkinsons’ Market opened its doors in the newly christened Sun Valley Shopping Center on Friday the 13th of July, 1956.

“Everybody said, ‘Oh, they won’t last a year,’” said Chip. But with the help of Chuck’s sons, Stan and Don, the store gained a foothold. Cans of green beans were soon flying off the shelves. Packaged cake mixes, Swanson TV dinners and Brie cheese jockeyed for room in shoppers’ carts. Kids pleaded, whined or flashed a cute smile for Dum Dums, Slo-Pokes and Atomic Fireballs.

Don’s sons, Chip and Whit, who today own the business, recall childhood experiences in their after-school playhouse—afternoons spent scurrying through the store and slipping

**“If there’s any strength to an independent business, it’s that they’re connected to their community.”**

**Whit Atkinson**

around corners in the stockroom. “We would come here after school every day and race around in the six-wheeled carts,” said Whit. “There were so many hiding spaces in the store. We had a great time.”

The business continued to expand, and the family sought additional space. “We did well enough that in 1969 the opportunity presented itself to grow,” said Chip. A partnership that included Steve Giacobbi and George Hellyer, Don’s brother-in-law, built Giacobbi Square on East Avenue and Fourth Street in the heart of Ketchum. The Atkinsons then sold the Sun Valley Shopping Center and opened up shop a few blocks away in the new square.

Then, as now, the ebb and flow of business varied with the seasons. “My dad had a graph that showed sales,” Chip said. “The patterns were so similar. It was the same year in and year out. December was big. Ski season was good, then it dropped off.” Business would rise again in the summer. “Even then, there were lots of second-home owners. The scale of that has changed...it grew...but the patterns are the same. The growth was steady. It wasn’t spectacular, but it was steady.”





**1969: Atkinsons' Market's founder, Charles "Chuck" Atkinson,** cuts the ribbon and officially opens Giacobbli Square, the location of their new store. To the right of Chuck is George Hellyer, Don's brother-in-law, who built the building. To the right of George are Chuck's sons, Don—the store's manager, and Stan—the meat department manager and assistant store manager, who continued their father's vision into the next century. Also pictured are Chuck's wife, Flossie, (back center with glasses) and Don's wife, Judy (to the left of Chuck), who designed the interior of the new store.

### **Destruction leads to expansion**

A spark to the roof in 1983 brought business to a halt. The fire spread quickly throughout the structure and the new store was destroyed. The market took up temporary residence a block north on East Avenue, where China Panda restaurant is today. The family also set up a produce tent in the town plaza. "That was May, and we were open again by Christmas," said Chip.

For the Atkinsons, the disaster was anything but. "It was one of those events that, in hindsight, was a blessing in disguise," said Chip. "We got a bigger store out of it. We were already starting to see we needed a bigger space, even before 1983."

This was not the family's first brush with upheaval.

In 1977, in order to establish a foothold in Hailey, Atkinsons' took over the Triple S grocery. They quickly moved to a bigger location, the Fox Building—now the Hailey Library—and when an expiring lease prompted yet another move, Don and Stan decided to build specifically to meet the needs of the Hailey Atkinsons'.

The brothers owned land on Main Street and West McKercher Boulevard, which had been bought with an eye to future business ventures. But plans for Hailey's Atkinsons' to be situated on the north end of town were eventually abandoned. "The city and county fought so much," Chip said. A more central location was finally

approved, and Alturas Plaza opened, one block east of Main Street, in 1993 with Atkinsons' Market and The Drug Store as the anchors. Less than 10 years later, the city and county allowed grocery titan Albertsons to build on the very site the Atkinsons had initially sought.

In 2003, another expansion opportunity arose when Valley Market in Bellevue went up for sale. "We saw the growth, and Bellevue has a way to go, but obviously it seemed right," said Chip. "Earlier, we never would have built a store there because it would cannibalize our Hailey store too much. But since somebody else did it..."

Part of the family's secret has been to insulate their business from the vagaries of real estate. Buying one's property, Whit said, is "critical." "You have to control your destiny. The value of real estate (here) is not based on reality." That philosophy, beginning with grandfather Chuck, has allowed Atkinsons' to move swiftly when opportunity presented itself.

### **A family reunited**

A few years before Alturas Plaza opened, Whit returned from college and began to get involved in the business. Their sister, Tory, also came back and joined the team.

In 1995, Don and Stan agreed to sell their interest in the business to the three children. "My kids were doing all the work," said Don. "They had all the responsibility.



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I said, 'If they're going to do all that, they should have all the ownership.'" Having his children work in the business was no certainty. "I told them they had to work for somebody else before they could come back here," said Don. "You can't just work for your dad." Don had an idea Whit would come back into the fold, but he was less sure about Chip. When Chip told his father of his wishes, "you could have knocked me over," said Don. "I said, 'Come on back.' I was so lucky to have all of them back." Indeed, Don counted on luck rather than force. "I think my dad always hoped, but he never pushed," Chip said.

Tory, who managed personnel, has since left the business, but the brothers continue operating the three stores jointly. Chip's wife, Monica, runs The Drug Store in Hailey, and Whit's wife, Susie, works in the Ketchum store. "I

think we're pretty lucky," Whit said. "We divided the work so it's not a problem. We don't fight to the death. I can't think of a time when something didn't happen because of a disagreement. We're on the same page on most things."

Although Stan died in the spring of 2006, Don feels the fortune of family all around him. While Tory lived in California for many years, she has since moved back. All three children live near their father. "I can throw a rock and hit Chip's house," said Don. "It's the luckiest thing in the world to have them all here."

Keeping intra-brood peace is one aspect to a successful family business. But the Atkinsons say making good with the community is another imperative. "It's real important to be very generous in what we give back to the community," said Chip, who estimates the family gives away a couple

**"In 1956, everybody said, 'Oh, they won't last a year.'"**

**Chip Atkinson**

## The people behind the counters



**Mike Woodall**  
 Meat department manager  
 Ketchum store  
 10 years

Keeping up with the varied requests of a national and international clientele is one of the best parts of Mike Woodall's job. "It's very challenging and at the same time, very rewarding," he said. "I have the opportunity to buy products from all over the U.S. and all over the world. That part is very exciting. People want the best, the very best quality. This summer people want certain items. Next year it'll be something else. That's the challenge." Woodall rises early to make the long drive from Shoshone to Ketchum every morning. Less expensive housing in Lincoln County allows him to continue working in a place that is by now a second home to him. "This will be my 11th Christmas here," he said. "I wouldn't trade this job for anything."



**Margaret Kacalek**  
 Supervisor checker  
 Hailey store  
 19 years

Margaret Kacalek joins the north-bound flow of cars each morning to travel from her home south of Bellevue to her other "home" in Hailey. "Mostly I take care of the front end and make sure all the checkers get their job done," said the 19-year veteran of Atkinsons' Market. "I've had a very good experience here. It's almost my first home. The best part is meeting people, waiting on people," she said. "And I love my bosses and co-workers. There's very good teamwork." Kacalek feels the passing of time only when younger employees—some who do carryouts are just in their teens—return for a visit. "When they come back, they're married and have kids. You're going, 'Oh my gosh. Where did that time go?' It's like you raise them as a family."

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hundred thousand dollars' worth of cash every year, and tens of thousands more in gifts of goods. Local charities, including the Sun Valley Summer Symphony, the Sun Valley Center for the Arts' Wine Auction and numerous children's programs have benefited from the Atkinsons' support. "That's the duty of an independent, family-owned business," said Whit. "If there's any strength to an independent business, it's that they're connected to their community."

### A high-end store?

Over the years the family has dealt with the community's perception that their store is high-end. The recent increase in the popularity of health foods, organics and specialty foods, which cost more than mass-produced, mainstream foods, have only added fuel to the view that Atkinsons' is a pricey place to shop. "The hard part is," said Chip, "organics have become a more desirous commodity, as well as specialty foods. Some of that stuff is

*Continued on page 80*

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**Sue Noël**  
*Customer service desk,  
Ketchum store  
3 years*

Sue Noël's face is a familiar one to many locals. Besides her three years working at Atkinsons', and 30 years shopping there,

she's served on the Ketchum City Council, the KART board and the Housing Authority board. Her voice is familiar, too. "I'm really active in singing," said the Caritas Chorale member. However, her activity at work rivals her off hours. As a customer service clerk, demands come in from every direction. "This desk is multi-tasking to the nth degree. It's sort of like being a concierge in a hotel. I give recommendations on where to eat and what to do, things that don't really have anything to do with Atkinsons'. I've lived here so long, I can do that." One of her favorite tasks is selling lottery tickets. The customers, the Atkinson family and the daily challenges will keep her working at the store for years to come. "Unless I win the lottery, I'll do this until I drop at the cash register."



PHOTOS: TIM BROWN



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# REAL ESTATE

Changing the  
LANDSCAPE  
of the  
WOOD RIVER VALLEY

Over the past three decades, Blaine County's skyrocketing real estate prices have resulted in many year-round residents struggling to survive in a high-end resort town. How can the Wood River Valley reconcile its undeniably attractive wealth with the real need to maintain a sustainable community? As the market stutters nationwide, Greg Stahl took this opportunity to examine the changing reality of the valley's real estate. Photos by David N. Seelig.

**M**uch has changed in 25 years, but maybe nothing quite as dramatic as inflation of property values in Sun Valley and the surrounding area. In 1982, the cumulative net value of all properties in Blaine County (which includes the cities of Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley) was \$912.5 million. By 2006, those same properties were worth \$11.72 billion. It was an explosion that affected all corners of the local economy. Realtors and construction companies rode the wave of inflation to prosperous careers while local elected officials struggled to stem the flooding tide with regulations encouraging smart, controlled growth.

The side effects were unmistakable. Facing ever-escalating home prices, people making lower or middle

incomes were met with formidable challenges in their quests to secure permanent footholds in the valley. In the late 1990s, local governments began to respond, but it is questionable as to

whether they acted soon enough. Currently, Blaine County faces a 2.5 percent negative growth rate of its 20- to 39-year-old residents, according to U.S. Census data. And that is despite the fact that the county continues to experience 11 percent overall population growth.

The myriad of variables at work is astounding. Climbing home prices, which contribute to a mass exodus of the area's youthful vitality, increasing government regulation, and a ceaseless influx of

staggering wealth are all at play.

"You can tell 'em I'm confused," said Drew Sanderford, associate director of Blaine County's affordable housing agency. "Tell 'em we sat out here for an hour trying to figure out how to tell this story, and we couldn't. I mean, how do you explain this to people? You don't. You have to live it to know it."

**In 1982,  
the cumulative  
net value  
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\$912.5 million.  
By 2006,  
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\$11.72 billion.**

**Left: A stroll down the beautifully appointed corridor** of Copper Ridge, a spectacular six-penthouse development in the heart of downtown Ketchum, is a lonely one. All six of the \$2.5 million to \$3.3 million condos have remained empty since they were built in 2004. Has the Wood River Valley's real estate bubble burst? And where do we go from here?



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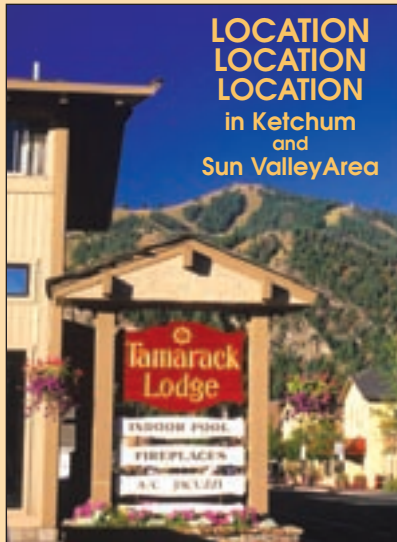
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## What you get for \$650,000 in Blaine County

*In September 2006, writer and local resident **Timi Saviers** enlisted Realtor Barb Vanderpool for a tour of homes that could be purchased throughout the valley for around \$650,000. A single price range was chosen in order to illustrate the impact of location on a property's price. Starting south of Bellevue and working their way north to Sun Valley, the pair discovered a variety of abodes in the price range, although not a wide inventory. A brief foray north of Ketchum found not one slice of acreage in the allotted price range.*



### South of Bellevue

**List Price:** \$699,000  
**Bedrooms:** 3  
**Bathrooms:** 2.5  
**Interior:** 2,021 sq. ft.  
**Lot Size:** 20 acres  
**Date Built:** 2001

This area of the valley has a true country feel and is a 40-minute drive to Ketchum. A comfortable single-family home with a few nice touches, such as high ceilings, alder cabinets, custom closets and a country porch, the 20 acre lot would benefit from some landscaping to create privacy and ambiance.



### Bellevue

**List Price:** \$649,000  
**Bedrooms:** 4  
**Bathrooms:** 3  
**Interior:** 2,794 sq. ft.  
**Lot Size:** 0.28 acres  
**Date Built:** 2006

This single-family home is newly constructed, has quality interior finishes and ample living space. It has cathedral ceilings, hardwood floors, granite counters, slate tiling, spacious bathrooms, walk-in closets, a custom fireplace and a guest/bonus room with bath and excellent views over a large garage.



### Hailey

**List Price:** \$649,000  
**Bedrooms:** 3  
**Bathrooms:** 2.5  
**Interior:** 2,305 sq. ft.  
**Lot Size:** 0.59  
**Date Built:** 1991

Situated on the northern edge of Hailey this single-family home is a short bike ride to town and a conservative 20-minute drive to Ketchum. Located on a bench lot in an upscale neighborhood, this is a very livable home. High ceilings, custom closets and a practical floor plan create a comfortable living space. The kitchen is in need of an update and a few cosmetic touches are required throughout, but the home has a clean and quiet feel with several large windows looking out onto a private and nicely landscaped yard.



### Mid Valley

**List Price:** \$699,000  
**Bedrooms:** 5  
**Bathrooms:** 3  
**Interior:** 2,628 sq. ft.  
**Lot Size:** 0.66 acres  
**Date Built:** 1971

This home with "potential" is in the beautiful and sought-after East Fork area. With lots of sun, mature trees and access to many trails, the location is great. A darkly cabinesque home with an awkward floor plan, everything about this house looks original, 35 years old and vintage. However, it is not easy to find a place for this price between Hailey and Ketchum (no condos), and the location can't be beat.

### History of a valley property

The following is information on one property from the Sawtooth Board of Realtors' records. A three-bedroom, two-bathroom, 2,300 sq. ft. home in the Ketchum neighborhood of Third Avenue and Edelweiss Street was on the market for \$135,000 in 1986, \$319,000 in 1996, and now goes for somewhere in the region of \$1,185,000. That's a rise of more than \$52,000 a year. However, home prices in this valley are still reasonable when compared with other Western resort towns. In Aspen, Colorado, \$650,000 will get you a one-bedroom, one-bath, 543 sq. ft. condominium built in 1970. Even with a softening housing market, the Wood River Valley is still a good investment.



### Ketchum

List Price: \$695,000

Bedrooms: 3

Bathrooms: 2

Interior: 1,166 sq. ft.

Date Built: 1999

This condo is a short walk to the River Run lifts and steps to the bike path. On the second floor, the condo

has a short, but dark and under-a-freeway-bridge-like entry corridor. Just hurry and get that door open because inside it is bright, warm and welcoming. The kitchen is a dream with thick, rich, granite counters and spacious bathrooms with designer finishes. The living room, though not large, has a high ceiling, a lovely fireplace and French doors onto the deck with Baldy views. The main bedroom also has French doors opening onto the deck with more sun and more views. All this and it comes nicely furnished, too.



### Warm Springs

List Price: \$682,000

Bedrooms: 2

Bathrooms: 2.5

Interior: 1,598 sq. ft.

Date Built: 2006

Utilitarian elegance describes this Pine Ridge townhouse. The well-thought-out floor plan, radiant heat

cement floors and great closet space make it a practical home, while the finishing touches, such as slab granite and travertine in the kitchen and bathrooms, alder cabinets, solid doors, high ceilings and architectural details lend a custom feel. Throughout the home, large windows bring in plenty of natural light and views of surrounding mountains. The courtyard is thoughtfully landscaped with native mountain ash and pine and there is plenty of storage for cars, skis and bikes in the attached two-car garage. Close to town and one mile from Warm Springs lifts, this place seems to have it all.



### Sun Valley

List Price: \$605,000

Bedrooms: 2

Bathrooms: 2

Interior: 980 sq. ft.

Date Built: 1967

Located across from the Sun Valley Reservoir, this condo is steps away from Sun Valley Village, ice-

skating, tennis and swimming pools and is a short walk to Dollar Mountain lifts. The condo is quite small but clean and seemingly solid. It looks like all the original interiors are intact: wood-beamed ceiling, darkly paneled walls and craggy, volcanic rock fireplace. The kitchen and downstairs bath are clean but tiny. The bedrooms are upstairs and, though small, have nice windows with views over the treed grounds.

www.sunvalleycentral.com

## SORTING OUT THE STEW

Blaine County is a complex demographic stew. Like many Western resort areas, it is well-known for its wealthy celebrity residents, but it is also very much a real community, a place where average people try to carve out average lives, and the presence of the über rich is just another part of everyday life. And that is one of the area's most redeeming qualities, said 30-year local Realtor Sherry Daech, who specializes in high-end real estate. "That's part of what makes this community special. Those clientele, they're treated like normal people."

But that clientele, and the reasons they're drawn to the Wood River Valley, have an unmistakable role to play in the ever-inflating cost of a home here. As people with deep pockets arrive, able and willing to pay astonishing prices for second or third homes, the cost of the entire market goes up. Simultaneously, the money they bring feeds a sizeable chunk of the local economy. Without them, there would be fewer architects, fewer engineers, fewer restaurant employees, and, yes, fewer writers. It's an ironic situation. Outside money makes it possible for middle-income people to live here and simultaneously puts local real estate out of reach for many.

What's more, following 9/11 and the subsequent tanking of the stock market, investors began to look to real estate as a safe venture. Low interest rates only helped catalyze the feeding frenzy. Between 2001 and 2006, the county's assessed property values soared, more than doubling from \$5.6 billion to \$11.72 billion. As momentum mounted, increasing numbers of people got into the game. The market fed itself. Prices spiraled upward, and Blaine County now has somewhere in the neighborhood of 400 real estate agents. That's roughly one agent for every 50 full-time residents. "It was just happening. People were coming here. We have a fabulous place to live," said Daech. "We are so lucky, and we still have a great sense of community, and we're not as pricey as some other Western resorts."

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## WHERE THERE'S A BOOM...

As with all booms, there is the inevitable deflation. And while local commentators stop short of predicting a bust, they do concede that the real estate market has slowed considerably, both here and nationwide, in the last six months.

Daech and other local real estate agents say the "market is readjusting itself" following the boom of the last five years. But however you label it, streets throughout the valley are congested with real estate sales signs, especially in Hailey, as the area experiences a housing glut.

"Things went up so quickly about a year and a half ago," said Asa Chandler, an agent with Windermere Real Estate in Ketchum. "The market is kind of correcting itself right now. It's a great time to be a buyer." But what she didn't say, and the kind of information real estate agents in general are not too likely to offer, is that if current trends continue, it may be an even better time to be a buyer in another



**Local Realtor Sherry Daech** is a self-made success story in a league of her own. She arrived in Blaine County some 30 years ago, young and practically penniless. Today, following an astoundingly successful real estate career, Daech is one of the most successful local women of her generation. Is it possible to mimic Daech's success in the socioeconomic climate of today's Wood River Valley?

few months, or maybe another year.

In the month of October, if you were looking to buy a home in Blaine County there were on average 1,100 of them to choose from, and that number may be growing. That's about 400 more than this time last year. "It's a good time to look around and make an offer because there are deals to be had," said Jim Figge, president of the Sawtooth Board of Realtors. Correspondingly, prices have begun to drop, in some cases by more than 10 percent. Chandler referenced a Hailey home listed in September for \$250,000. The asking price three months earlier had been \$315,000.

Figge acknowledged that the residential housing market is unusually flat. "Our phones are more quiet than usual. I think there are a lot of people who have a sit-back-and-wait attitude," he said. "Buyers are witnessing that our market is in a period of adjustment, and they're electing not to buy. They're waiting to see what the market will do."

In October of 2006, the Sawtooth



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Board of Realtors' Multiple Listings Service showed 1,038 residential properties for sale. That was down slightly from 1,079 on July 31 and up from 791 listed in July 2005. Including commercial properties and vacant land, there were 1,723 listings on October 8. Ann Tokareff, the board's executive officer, explained that some of the listings are for homes outside Blaine County, but the majority are situated in the Wood River Valley.

Figge is hesitant to call the housing surplus a glut because it doesn't apply to all segments of the market. Expensive homes fronting golf courses are still in high demand, but single-family homes, particularly in Hailey, are plentiful.

So, what's going on with the valley's housing market? Three things, said Figge. The market has leveled off and is readjusting following the recent real estate boom; interest rates are higher; and people are reacting to worldwide events. He also commented that some sellers have overpriced their properties. Now that the market has flattened out, they may have to lower them if they're anxious to sell. "I don't think anyone is

chipping into their equity yet," he said. "I think what sellers need to do is make it look like a deal, so it looks like if you don't buy it, the next guy will." If sellers can wait, though, prices are likely to go back up, Figge said. "Historically, our prices have not gone down, but just flattened. And how long we're in this flattened mood, I just can't guess."

Dan Gorham, Windermere of Ketchum's designated broker, agrees. "This market is still a very desirable place to live," he said. "If people had the chance to move here, would they? Yes. But without job growth, it can only support so many people."

### WHERE HAVE ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE GONE?

Job growth is a crucial aspect to this local quandary. Second-home owners and pleasure-seeking vacationers aren't attracted to a town without vitality, and without jobs and affordable housing, that sense of community—which many people cherish and see as a selling point for this area—could wane.

Although the careers associated with the development of high-end real estate

sales and construction have fed a significant chunk of the local economy, their product comes at the cost of affordability. "I was talking with a guy at work last week, and he's lived here his whole life," said Dan Gilmore, who's called the Wood River Valley home since 1999. "I asked him how long it takes to be considered a local. He said about 10 years—long enough to see one full rotation of friends come and go."

And so it is with many of the area's 20- and 30-something residents. They come, and they go, but when they go they take slivers of the area's youthful vitality with them. What's more, evidence indicates that more of them are leaving than in times past. "It's vacuous," Sanderford said. "I mean, people are leaving."

The U.S. Census Bureau backs Sanderford's assertion. From 1970 to 1980, Blaine County experienced a significant jump in its 20- to 39-year-old population, from 26 percent of the total to 46 percent of the total. But it has been declining ever since, both in percentage and, occasionally, in overall numbers. From 1980 through 2004, the

Years of experience have taught us that in time a sale is forgotten, but friendship and trust always remain.

#### JIM FIGGE

13 yr. resident, married with 3 children, 13 yrs. full-time realtor, 2 terms as Pres. Sawtooth Board of Realtors, VP Rocky Mtn. Resort Alliance of Realtors.

#### JED GRAY

58 yr. resident, married with 4 children, 25 yrs. in real estate sales, land planning & development, 4 time Pres. of Board of Realtors.

#### ALEX HIGGINS

30 yr. Ketchum resident, 30 yrs. full-time Real Estate Broker, past Pres. of SV Ski Education Foundation, California and Colorado State Bar member.



#### TOM MONGE

30 yr. resident, 10 yrs. full-time Broker/Consultant, 20 yrs. as MAI appraiser/mortgage banker. Degree in Real Estate from University of Denver.

#### TERRY PALMER

33 yr. Ketchum resident, married with 3 children, 10 yrs. full-time realtor, former operator/owner local sports shop, former Olympic and U.S. Ski Team member.

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percentage of 20- to 39-year-olds dropped with each census, from 46 percent in 1980 to 37 percent in 1990 to 29 percent in 2000. The projected number in 2004 dropped still further to 26 percent.

Essentially, since 1980, the number of people in that age bracket has stayed the same, or even dropped slightly, while overall population boomed, from 9,841 people in 1980 to 21,103 in 2004.

**Blaine County  
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 somewhere in  
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 of 400 real estate  
 agents. That's  
 roughly one  
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 residents.**

Although many young people never intended to stay for the long term, some might have if it were easier to make ends meet. At the root of the matter is that area wages increase at an average pace while real estate shoots through the roof. From 2001 to 2004, average annual individual incomes in Blaine County actually decreased, adjusting from \$31,802 to \$31,770. In that same period, the assessed net value of Blaine County properties increased from \$5.6 billion to \$8.1 billion, according to a July 2006 Blaine County Housing Needs Assessment. Clearly, wages have not kept pace with the inflation of real estate. Somewhere, something has to break.

Aaron Domini, 27, has lived in the Wood River Valley for three years and has worked for Citizens for Smart Growth and Ketchum-based Living Architecture. He said the relative absence of 20- and 30-something residents creates a unique social dynamic for people like himself who have chosen to stick around. "You end up

expanding your social group,” he said. “I’ve got friends from 20 to 50. If I lived in a city, it would probably be very different.”

Domini stressed that the situation in the Wood River Valley is not unique. It’s endemic to mountain towns around the West, and, for the time being, the area’s boons far outweigh its pitfalls for him. However, if we want to keep Ketchum a desirable place to live with a vibrant community, it will take a diverse socioeconomic community and people of varying ages. The reality is that without young professionals as the backbone of our economy, we are creating an economy with no successors.”

## NIMBYs

The real missing link, however, is housing that people of varying classes and demographics can afford. It’s a relatively new, sometimes contentious issue that has made progress on the affordable front sometimes difficult.

In the fall of 1998, during the local housing program’s infancy, affordable housing took center stage in Blaine County’s resort city of Ketchum as some citizens tried to initiate a recall of Ketchum City Council members who voted in favor of the city’s first affordable housing project. A slew of letters to the city offered varying complaints. Some were concerned that the “quality of construction” would not be up to par and would devalue surrounding houses. Some worried the two-bedroom condos, first planned as rentals but which were eventually sold at \$135,000 each, would attract criminals as residents. “If you can’t afford to live (here), then leave,” one applicant for The Fields reported an anonymous caller saying in October 1999.

The recall petition failed for lack of signatures, and some might argue that shows overall community sentiment was accurately reflected in the City Council’s decision to give The Fields the thumbs up. The contradiction is nothing new in the affordable housing arena. NIMBYs (the not-in-my-backyard people) generally recognize the need for housing at all prices, as long as it’s in somebody else’s neighborhood. “In society in general, that’s always been a problem,” said current Ketchum Mayor Randy Hall, who was one of the three City Council members



photo: Fred Lindholm  
architect: Scott Laidlaw

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targeted by the petition. “But the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few. It was the first project, and it came on the heels of a very emotional debate. I think we did pretty well on our first go-around. The project was a success.”

Still, local communities are far behind the curve. A 2002 study found a countywide deficit of 473 affordable housing units. That demand grew to 1,200 units by summer 2006. Yet, developers continue to build multi-million-dollar condominiums that sometimes sit empty.

This phenomenon continues to displace area workers. Sanderford has worked as associate director of the Blaine-Ketchum Housing Authority for more than a year. He said affordable housing is both important and contentious. More than that, he said, it’s simple altruism that drives it. The community must collectively decide that a sense of community is something worth making some sacrifices for. “When you think about it at a real visceral level, it’s the right thing to do. Community is a good thing.”

**WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?**

No matter how you cut it, the bottom line is still that Sun Valley and its surrounding communities constitute a magnificent place to live. People will continue to retire here. People will continue to carve out ordinary livings as best they can. And local real estate prices will probably continue to climb.

Daech, who is a self-made success story, arrived in Blaine County some 30 years ago, young and practically penniless. She fell in love with the place and made things work. She is one of the most successful Wood River Valley women of her generation. And, yes there are still success stories to be made here. But it is debatable as to whether today someone like Daech could arrive here with nothing and build such a resounding success.

Nevertheless, the bottom line is that places like Sun Valley will always be in demand, said Daech. “If we weren’t so unique and so small and such a wonderful community, I might think that (the market could take a downward turn), but I don’t,” she said. “I think we were all surprised by how much the market grew, but it’s there, and I think it’s going to stay there.”

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At the annual Sun Valley Hawaiian Nationals Telemark race—one of the boldest rites of spring on Bald Mountain—the tandem tele pairs are the stars of the show.

Costumes and absurd styles are the norm at this classic ski-town extravaganza, but it's the spectacle of synchronized knee drops that turn out the crowds each April. Two skiers on one pair of skis, the tandem tele tango is a sight to behold.

Last winter, one team quickly became legendary. As other couples kicked and spasmodically jerked through the race gates, Matt Filoon and Jessica Soime injected some brief ballet into the slapstick afternoon. Most teams were lucky to pass three gates, much less post a time through the entire giant slalom course. But these married yoga instructors demolished the competition. Their coordinated knee drops (“one-two-three, and kick...”) were executed with the balance of one athlete. The two danced downward to a convincing win.

Filoon and Soime had an ace up their sleeves. They were married on Baldy in 2002 at the Roundhouse Restaurant. For their grand exit, the couple had a surprise for their guests. Rather than take a sleigh-ride or even a chairlift into the sunset of marital bliss, they mounted a pair of skinny, no-name 220s and free-heeled into their future.

The skis were found, as so many good things are, at Ketchum's Gold Mine Thrift Shop. They mounted two sets of telemark bindings, painted on some rosy red hearts and began to practice weeks before their wedding.



**Matt Filoon and Jessica Soime** inject some tandem tele glamor into an afternoon of slapstick skiing.

At the outset, the outlook was grim. “The first time we did it, it was a disaster,” Filoon recalls. “We called them the ‘divorce skis’ right from the beginning.” The pioneering couple stuck with it though, turning heads while training on Dollar Mountain and lower Warm Springs run on Baldy.

When Filoon and Soime want to get up on a hill these days, they usually head into the backcountry—on separate pairs of skis. But one sunny day this spring, they donned their wedding clothes (also Gold Mine treasures), returned to their

stomping grounds and invited the *Sun Valley Guide* along. They are forced to briefly separate when riding the lifts—she walks, he stays on the sticks—but when gravity is on their side, they reunite.

After their triumph at Hawaiian Nationals, these sunny spring days are no longer just practice. They may not like to admit it. They may know they look a bit silly. But as the two heels lift and burn past you on Flying Squirrel, you can sense the joy. Smiles are plastered on their faces, one right behind the other. **SVG**

“The first time we did it, it was a disaster... we called them the ‘divorce skis’ right from the beginning.”



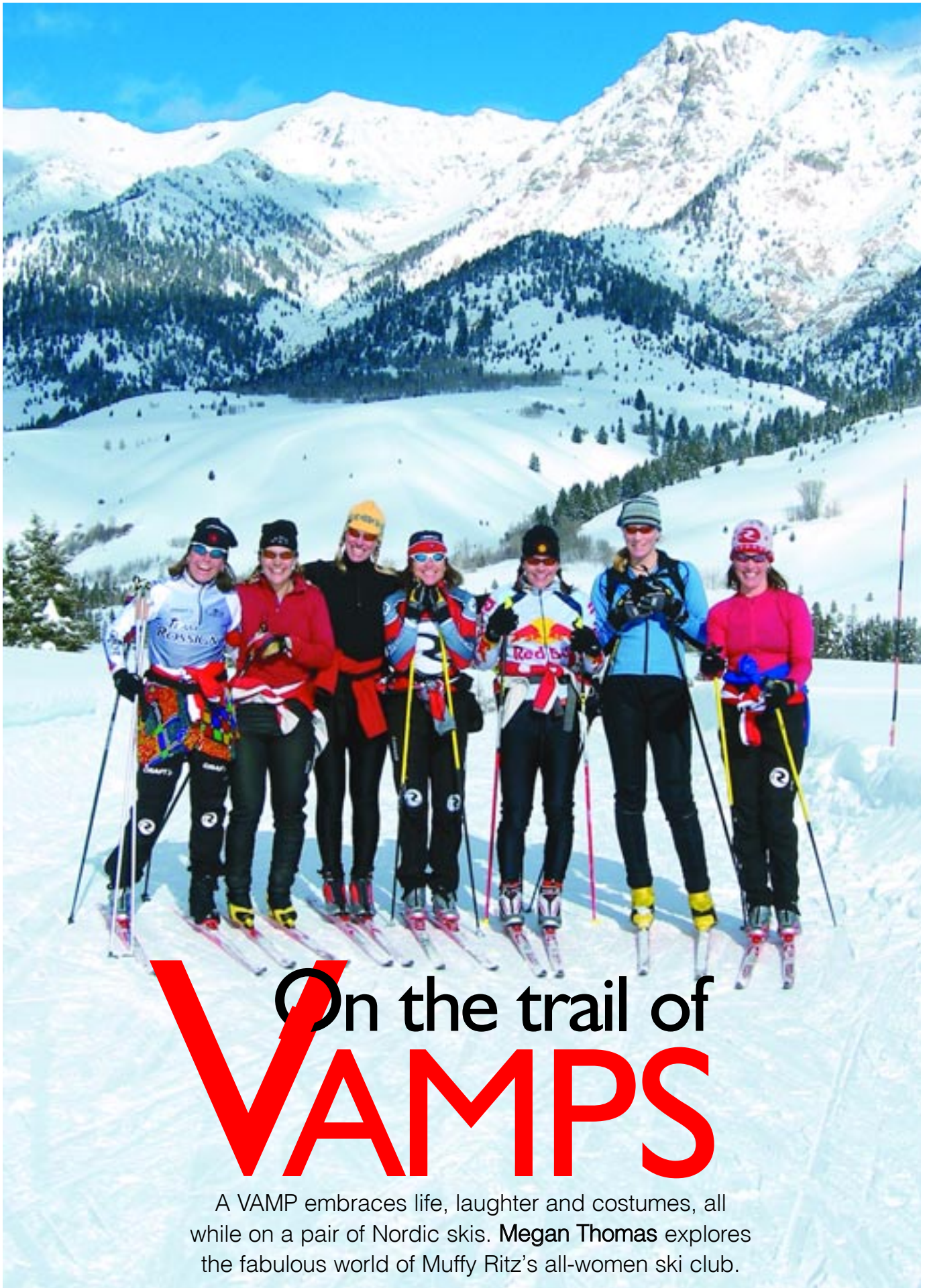
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# On the trail of **VAMPS**

A VAMP embraces life, laughter and costumes, all while on a pair of Nordic skis. **Megan Thomas** explores the fabulous world of Muffy Ritz's all-women ski club.



**G**iggling women bedecked in wedding dresses, lacey lingerie and provocative nun's costumes skate across trails groomed to corduroy perfection. Their laughter echoes through the trees as they delve into yet another strenuous workout. It is a rare treat to hear this, the cry of the VAMPS.

Short for Vimen And Muffy's ProgramS (vimen is a play on women), VAMPS is part social club, part workout group and part ski class. And, it's exclusively for women. Muffy Ritz, who puts the "M" in VAMPS and is the club's founder and head coach, has watched the organization explode into the valley's most popular cross-country women's ski group over the last nine years. Assisted by nine, high-caliber ski coaches, including former Olympic racers and U.S. national team members, Ritz leads this group of dedicated female athletes in pre-season dry land training in the fall and then Nordic skiing once a week, every week, from early December to March.

"I see VAMPS sort of as a sorority. You have a group of 10, energetic coaches who drive the train," explained Ritz. "The women are there for social reasons; they are there to get a workout, for motivational purposes, and they are there for fun."

Ritz guarantees that fun underlies the entire experience, ensuring time for parties, crazy costume days and social chitchat time intermixed with intense ski training. Even the smaller subgroups, divided by ski ability, reflect the VAMPS' lighthearted spirit. Labeled the Rising Stars, Scamps, Tramps, Champs and Amps, the groups range from beginner to expert.

Coaches work with each group, taking a fresh approach each week. Methods such as relay races and treasure hunts teach technique, agility and distance skiing. It seems

**VAMPS is about lasting friendships** and motivational support. Left to right: Muffy Ritz, founder of the all-women's ski club, Karoline Droege, Teresa Hukari, Kim Nalen, Rebecca Rusch, Dana Dueter and Darla McRoberts. Photo by Tullio Celeno.

to work, as members rarely miss a practice session or leave the club. "Everybody works hard. They work very hard. But, they have a lot of fun doing it," said Ritz. "And, that's why they keep coming back. If it was pure 'boot camp,' they wouldn't come back, but they actually have fun."

A humble but accomplished athlete, Ritz was a member of the U.S. Ski Team and continues to race on the master's circuit. She has also coached junior racers. Now, she is exclusively a VAMP.

"I don't think there has ever been a consistent group like this. I believe this is the most established, biggest, female skiing group in the country."

*Muffy Ritz*

VAMPS was born in 1997. A friend, Carol Rank, approached Ritz about private coaching sessions. Ritz agreed, if Rank recruited a few other women for the lessons.

That season, Ritz hit the Lake Creek trails, north of Ketchum, with four women. Less than 10 years later, the group counts more than a hundred members, with around 30 women on the waiting list. "It went from those four, then to 40, then to 60 then to 80, then to a 100," Ritz said. "I don't think there has ever been a consistent group like this. I believe this is the most established, biggest, female skiing group in the country."

She limits the program to approximately a hundred women to help maintain the authenticity of the experience. "I want to know their names. I want to know how people ski. I want to know that I am taking care of them, in terms of what they get out of the program."



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**R**itz leads with enthusiasm, energy and by example, say her students, and possesses an uncanny ability to build their confidence. It's part of her natural demeanor, her contagious zest for life, that encourages skiers to stretch their physical limits and accomplish their goals.

Ritz sets high standards in an already physically demanding sport, encouraging her skiers to tackle even the Boulder Mountain Tour through the mountainous Sawtooth National Recreation Area each year. "I like to set the bar a little higher than most people think they can achieve," explained Ritz. "Once they reach that bar, they are like, 'Wow, I did that?'"

Last year, as always, the VAMPS took a bite out of the tour. Forty members participated in the 20-mile race, considered to be the apex of the Wood River Valley's Nordic ski season.

VAMPS skier Jean Cooper is proud of her Boulder record; she has

completed the race five times. In her late 70s, she is the group's oldest member, and appreciates the relaxed nature, camaraderie and support that come with the all-female environment. The VAMPS experience is enough to keep the senior skier returning for the demanding physical workout week after week. "VAMPS just gets me out there," said Cooper. "That's the thing I like about it. We have had a couple of miserable, sleety, snowy days and if it weren't for the VAMPS, I'd just say, 'Well, I'm not going to ski today.' It is such a good group of teachers and such a good group of students, it's just always fun. Even on the worst, coldest, most miserable days, it's fun."

The fun attracts women from their late twenties to septuagenarians, since age has no relevance in VAMPS. The club is about lasting friendships and strong motivational support. "Every single person in there is a fun person to know," said Cooper.

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**VAMP Sandra Willingham channels** the famous mountain woman, Heidi, as she revels in the spirit of cross-country skiing. Dress-up ski days are part of the fun that permeates the VAMPS program. Photo by Becky Smith

Lynn Chaldu, a recent recruit, agrees. New to the valley, she joined to meet friends with similar interests. Chaldu discovered a tightly knit bunch that gathers for fun social events, such as a Christmas and end-of-season party. Chaldu especially appreciates the group's affection for dress-up days, the annual "Dress like a VAMP Day" being a particular favorite. Albums bulging with photographs document that anyone who desires can ski in a wedding dress or a Heidi outfit.

Laughter is the gift Jan Toohey treasures from VAMPS. One of the club's longest members, laughter wasn't prevalent in her life when she started Nordic skiing. A marathon runner, Toohey was barely able to get out of bed after losing her best friend and long-time running partner to cancer. Battling depression, she happened upon an article in the *Idaho Mountain Express* on Ritz's athletic accomplishments. It also mentioned that Ritz taught women's Nordic clinics. Unfortunately, the clinics were full for the season.

Toohey decided to meet the class at the Lake Creek parking lot to see if she could tag along. Ritz invited her to join the group, unaware of her inexperience at Nordic skiing. "I put on the skate skis and couldn't even get across the Lake Creek Bridge. I couldn't even stand up. The other women were very accomplished. They were just too nice to kick me out," Toohey recalled.

Eight years later, Toohey has become an avid Nordic skier and devoted VAMPS member. She, like many other women, can't seem to get enough of the camaraderie, costumes, laughs and skiing, which all converge on the Nordic ski trails.

It's this, the quintessential VAMPS experience, that has inspired so many Wood River Valley women to become Nordic skiers, returning year after year to the forested, snowy trail system with smiles, costumes and laughter in tow. "I am always amazed that every year the same people are in the class," observed Ritz. "They don't get enough of it. They keep coming back." 

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# What's a flying squirrel got to do with it?

Sun Valley ski instructor **Greg Moore** navigates through the intriguing origins of the monikers of Bald Mountain's ski runs. Photos by **Chris Pilaro**.

It is widely known that the 70-year-old Sun Valley resort is situated where it is because Austrian count Felix Schaffgotsch deemed the surrounding mountains perfect for skiing. What is not quite so well known is that skiing did not begin in earnest on Bald Mountain until three years after the resort opened its doors. Alpine skiing was still in its infancy in America, and it was thought that there were not enough accomplished skiers to justify its development in 1936. Management eventually spotted their restless Austrian ski instructors hiking up and skiing down Baldy on their off days and quickly determined to realize the untapped potential of that glorious mountain.

The first lifts were rushed in and opened in 1939. In the ensuing 66 years, the names of the runs on Sun Valley's cherished Baldy have been inspired by a variety of sources and events, many of which serve as bookmarks to the country's skiing history.

Information for many of the names' origins listed below was obtained from Nelson Bennett, who worked at the Sun Valley resort from 1940 to 1960 as ski patrol director and mountain manager, and from Walter Hofstetter, who worked from 1949 to 1965 as a ski patrolman, mountain manager and ski instructor.

# River Run

The runs first developed on Baldy, which opened in December 1939, were named after geographical features. Those include Ridge, River Run and Canyon.

## College



Shortly after it was developed, Sun Valley began to host ski races for college ski teams to help sell skiing over Christmas vacation. Though the races were not held on College, the run was named to promote visits by collegiate skiers. The tradition was somewhat revived in 2005 with the inauguration of the Holding Cup, a race for teams made up of college alumni. Participants and Sun Valley Company donate money to the alma maters of the top-placing teams.

## Rock Garden



The most obvious source of inspiration for this name is the run's southeastern exposure, where snow melts relatively fast, exposing rocks. However, the name may also derive from a section of the original Harriman Cup race course, which was held in 1937 and 1938 on Durrance Mountain, behind the Sawtooth National Recreation Area headquarters north of Ketchum. After racers skied down the mountain's main bowl, they were funneled into a rocky section called Rock Garden. The race was moved to the Warm Springs side of Baldy in 1939 and to the River Run side in 1941. That course included Ridge, Rock Garden and Exhibition. Durrance Mountain was named after Dick Durrance, who won the race three times.

## Exhibition



Soon to become famous as a showcase for expert skiers, the run was named for its location under the lift. When Baldy opened, the Exhibition single chair was part of the only route to the top. One of the lift's towers and four of its chairs have been refurbished and installed in front of the Lift Tower Lodge, at the southern entrance to Ketchum.

## Cut-off



When Baldy was first developed, skiers descending Ridge had to continue down Rock Garden. Cut-off was made to give skiers an alternate route to Canyon and the Roundhouse restaurant.

## Holiday



That name was the winner in a trail-naming contest held among employees when the run was cut in 1956.

## Blue Grouse



The large, dark ground bird is common on Baldy and throughout the Sawtooth National Forest.

## 42nd Street



Actually the lower segment of Mid River Run, this trail funnels skiers on most of the River Run side of the mountain to the base there. Due to its congested nature late in the day, Hofstetter named it after the street he had once stayed on in New York City.

## Olympic



Named in honor of the 1948 Winter Olympics in St. Moritz, Switzerland, held the year the run was cut.

## Cold Springs



Named after the springs that are now contained in a small building under the Cold Springs lift. The water is pumped uphill for use at the Roundhouse restaurant.



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# Warm Springs

This side of the mountain is named after Warm Springs Creek, which flows by the base and has numerous hot springs in it. Skiers getting on the lift can often smell the sulfur from Guyer Hot Springs, just upstream. In addition to Warm Springs Run, ski runs on this side of the mountain include:

**Limelight** ♦ This run was the original lift line for a chairlift built to the top in 1965. Skiers were “in the limelight” as they descended the steep and narrow bump run under the lift. The run was widened after the current lift line was cut in 1988 for the Challenger high-speed quad.

**International** ♦ Originally called Steilhang when it was cut in 1939, the run was reconfigured in 1960. Hofstetter gave it its current name to honor international-level downhill races held there in the early 1960s.

**Flying Squirrel** □ Named by Hofstetter when the run was cut in 1965. “Flying squirrels came out of the tops of the trees,” he said. “They looked like huge bats.”

**Arnold’s Run** ♦ Named in 2001 for frequent Sun Valley skier Arnold Schwarzenegger. It had originally been called Flying Maid, a name given by Hofstetter in honor of two young women from Seattle who worked as maids at Sun Valley. He said the women often hiked on Baldy and frequently stopped to visit with the men cutting the run. One day, he said, they realized with a panic that they were late for work, and crew members watched the maids bounding downhill to get back to Sun Valley on time.

**Picabo’s Street** ♦ Named after former Sun Valley Ski Team racer Picabo Street, who won a gold medal in super G in the 1998 Olympics in Nagano, Japan, and a silver medal in downhill in the 1994 Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway. The run had previously been called Plaza because it was the widest cut run on the mountain.



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**Greyhawk** □ Mountain employees say they've assumed trail crew members saw a gray hawk fly out of the trees when the run was being cut, similar to what happened at Flying Squirrel.

**Cozy** □ Before the run was cut, Sun Valley Company owner Earl Holding told mountain manager Max McKinnon that he wanted a run there that gave him the same "cozy" feeling he got skiing on Seattle Ridge. McKinnon honored the request, and gave him the name to boot.

**Hemingway** □ Named for writer Ernest Hemingway, who made frequent visits to the area beginning in 1939. Between hunting and fishing trips, Hemingway wrote parts of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Islands in the Stream* and *A Moveable Feast* here. In 1959, Hemingway bought a house in Ketchum, where he lived until he shot himself there in 1961.

**Brick's Island** □ "Brick" was the nickname of a Sun Valley snowcat driver named Gary Grant, who was killed while on a machine doing summer trail construction at another ski area.



A skier descends Limelight on Bald Mountain.



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# Seattle Ridge

The area was named after a group of skiers from Seattle who regularly hiked up the ridge from Broadway and skied the backside before the lift was built in 1976.

## Gretchen's Gold

Named for Gretchen Fraser, who won a gold medal in slalom in the 1948 Olympics in St. Moritz, Switzerland. Fraser was the first American alpine skier to win an Olympic gold medal. She had trained at Sun Valley and later worked for Union Pacific Railroad, the original owner of the resort, as a public relations assistant.

## Muffy's Medals

Named for former Sun Valley Ski Team racer Muffy Davis, who won three gold medals in the 2002 Paralympics and a silver medal in the 1998 Paralympics. Davis had just been named to the U.S. Ski Team's development squad when she broke her back during a training run on Bald Mountain in 1989. The accident left her without the use of her legs.

## Christin's Silver

Named for former Sun Valley Ski Team racer Christin Cooper, who won a silver medal in giant slalom in the 1984 Olympics in Sarajevo.

## Leigh Lane

Actress Janet Leigh was a frequent visitor and part-time resident of Sun Valley since 1963, and wrote a historical novel about the resort's early years called *House of Destiny*. The cat track across Seattle Ridge to Broadway was named in her honor after she died in 2004 at age 77.


## Byron's Park

Named for Byron Cady, a Sun Valley ski instructor who disappeared while rafting the Salmon River. Presumably he fell in the river while scouting at high water.

## Broadway

Named for the famed New York City boulevard, due to its function as a major artery for skiers exiting the Bowls.

*Continued on page 100*



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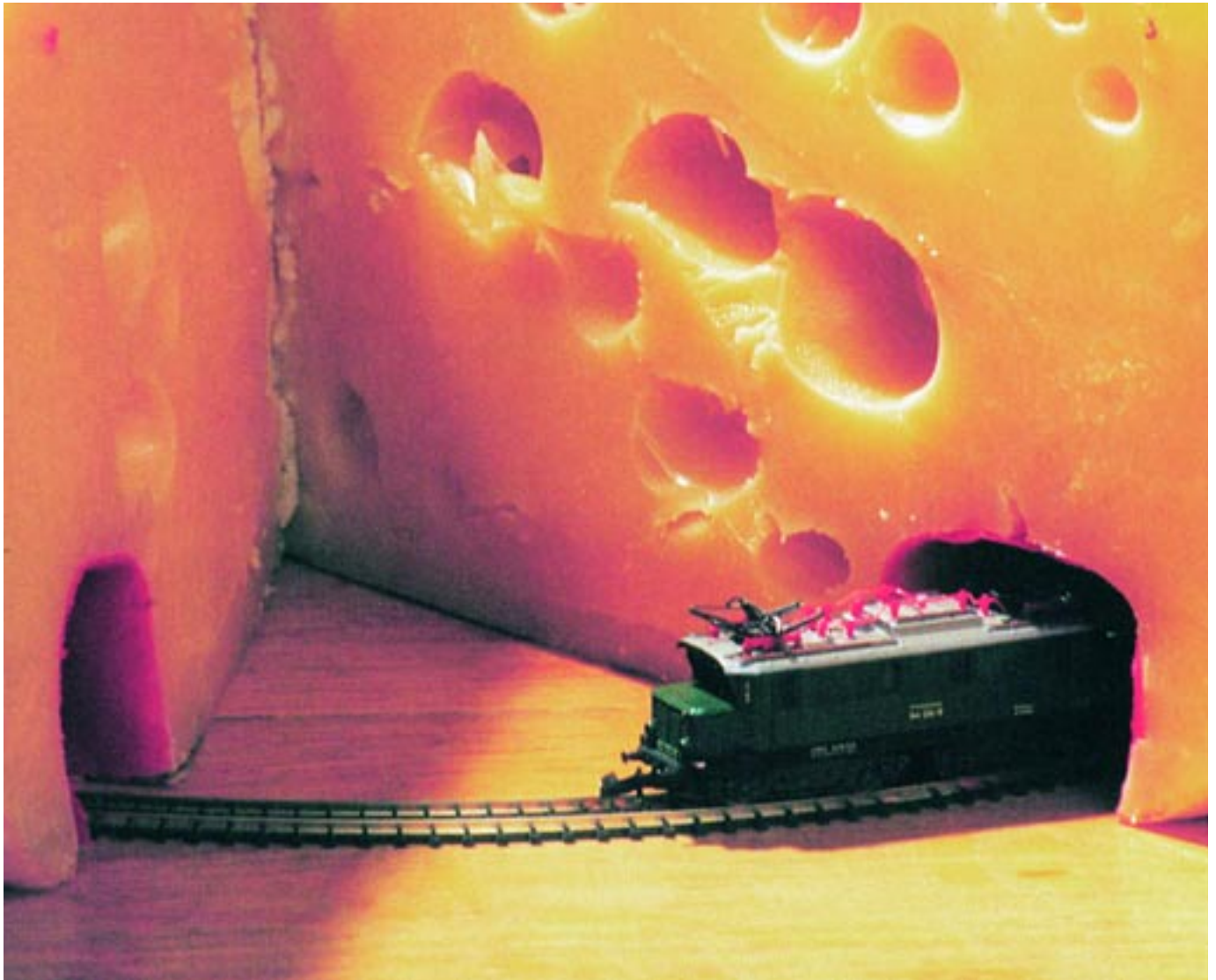
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**Tunnel 1995** by Paul Kos. Wood table, cheese round and toy train with track.

## Off the walls

Art does not always have to be on a wall or behind glass to enjoy. So says Hailey resident Jeanne Meyers, who will curate The Sun Valley Center for the Arts' contemporary art exhibit *Subversive Moves*. Meyers' mission is to bring art "off the walls" and she does so through a show that features unconventional sculpture and large pieces, some of which expose the more playful side of art. The work also expresses how contemporary art has defined itself from modern art through its recognition of the viewer. Much of the work in the show is only completed when the viewer interacts with it. In Paul Kos' *Tunnel* he uses a real round of Jarlsberg cheese and a real toy train to demonstrate that art has humor, and is not always about making a political statement. "People think they have to be serious about art in order to appreciate it," said Meyers. "Art should expand your view of life."

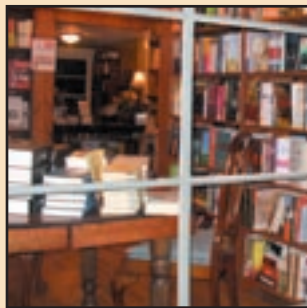
**Sabina Dana Plasse**

*Subversive Moves* will open at The Center on 4th and Washington Streets in Ketchum on January 12 and run through March.

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## Lost in a good history

Dana DuGan peruses the vast library of books on Idaho's history and digs up a few gems.

**A**fter a great morning of skiing down Bald Mountain's slopes, sore muscles ache for a soft chair and a good book, both of which can be found at Ketchum's Community Library. Ah, but the mind, still pulsing with the morning's activities, longs for something besides romance, mystery and sci-fi. This unique library has just the place.

The Library's Regional History Department is bursting with books on the people and historical events that shaped the local culture and lifestyle of the state of Idaho. One of the most impressive is *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, which was published in 1899 by Lewis Publishing Company of Chicago. At 726 pages, it's a fascinating compendium of historical sketches.

*An Illustrated History* contains portraits and biographies of leading citizens from Idaho's past, including Dr. Robert Nourse, Fred R. Reed, George Lewis, T.E. Picotte and the Honorable John Hailey. Hailey, an Idaho pioneer and statesman, first entered the state in 1862 and had a little town named after him.

The book's full subtitle is *An Illustrated History of the State*

of Idaho, containing a History of the State of Idaho from the Earliest Period of Its Discovery to the Present Time...and Biographical Mention of Many Pioneers and Prominent Citizens of Today. Stamped in gilt on the brown morocco leather front are the words Idaho: The Gem of the Mountains. Truly a gem, it contains plates from photographs, numerous portraits—many photoengraved—floral endpapers and gilt inner dentelle. The volume is huge and not a book one takes away.

For those who are looking for something more portable, regional historian Chris Millsbaugh offers these alternate selections.


*Spring of Gladness: Reminiscences of Pioneer Life in the Wood River Valley*, written by Mary Brown McGonigal in 1976, is the story of her parents' and her husband's families who homesteaded south of Bellevue near the base of Timmerman Hill. Many McGonigals still live in Bellevue.


*For Wood River Or Bust: Idaho's Silver Boom of the 1880s*, written by Clark C. Spence as part of the Idaho Legacy Series, is full of local tidbits.

Another selection is *The History of Alturas and Blaine Counties, Idaho* by George A. McLeod, focusing on prominent people of the early days and told in a quirky, readable way. For instance, many of the early statesmen in Idaho came from Hailey, not Ketchum or Sun Valley, as one might surmise. On that list are state superintendents of public instruction, Supreme Court judges, congressional representatives, an attorney general or two and even a few governors.

In 1962, Pearl Eva Barber wrote her family's story in a sweet, nearly homemade book that the library owns, called *The Galloping Ghosts of Galena*. It sounds like a daring mystery, but isn't.

"Whenever I have a hard question, a stump question on Idaho, I go to *Idaho and the Magic Circle: And How They Came To Be*, by Betty M. Bever," said Millsbaugh.


And, if strict history isn't the food for that inquiring mind, Millsbaugh points to rows of other Idaho books written by natives, celebrities and others who had the fortune to pause a while in the gem state, and then put pen to paper. 



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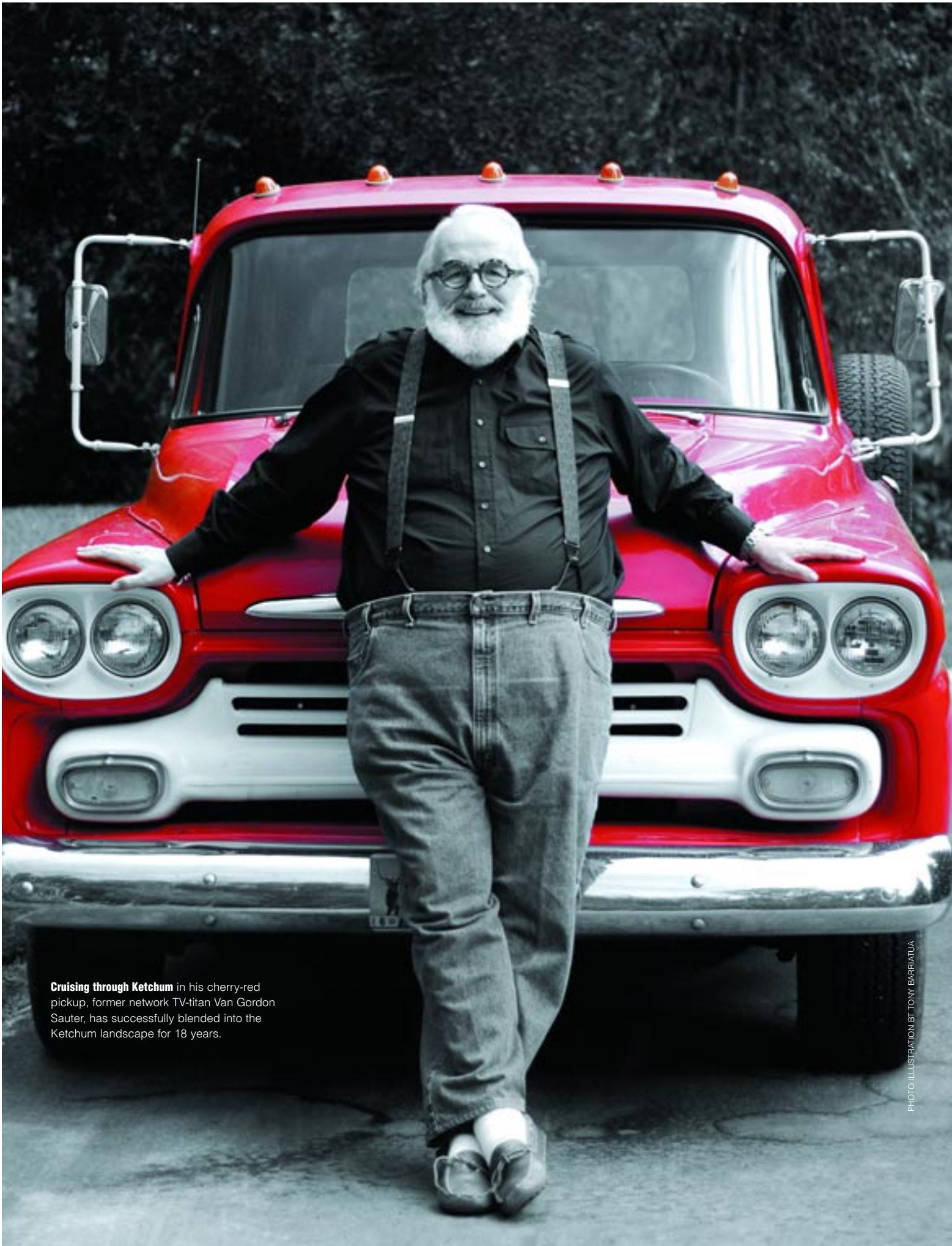


*Blooming Vale, oil on canvas, 12" x 36"*

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**Cruising through Ketchum** in his cherry-red pickup, former network TV-titan Van Gordon Sauter, has successfully blended into the Ketchum landscape for 18 years.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TONY BARRIATUA

# A conversation with Van Gordon Sauter

A legend in the world of broadcast television, Ketchum resident Van Gordon Sauter reigned supreme as president of CBS News and Fox News for 20 years. **Pat Murphy** sat down with this self-proclaimed “professionally irrelevant and socially mildewed” gentleman to digest his musings on the state of network television, politics, his relationship with Dan Rather and the future of the Wood River Valley. Photos by **Kirsten Shultz**.

**T**hat burley man with the abundant salt-and-pepper beard driving the cherry-red 1958 Chevy pickup around Ketchum is not a mountain man in town from the back-country to shop for vittles, or a Santa-for-hire on vacation.

Appearances can deceive.

Behind the jeans, suspenders and expensive print shirt is one of American television’s onetime most powerful executives, Van Gordon Sauter. For 18 years the former president of CBS News and Fox News has successfully blended into the Ketchum landscape and lifestyle without being spotlighted as another of the area’s “celebrity” residents.

That suits him fine. His years of fame—there were plenty of them in several venues—were heady and mostly gratifying. In the best years of Sauter’s reign, the CBS Evening News with anchor Dan Rather held the attention nightly of some 14 million viewers. For one 200-week stretch during Sauter’s era at CBS (1968-86), Rather was usually No. 1 in the ferociously competitive television nightly news lineup.

However, if Sauter’s network broadcasting tenure was bedecked in triumph, he also stirred controversy and enmity at CBS. As a 1996 *New York Times* article asked, “Is Van Gordon Sauter a TV visionary? Or is he a destructive provocateur?” As years passed, television historians judged he was both, but probably more visionary. Traditionalists, for example, were outraged when Sauter insisted on including soft features out of Washington and New York—but those innovations are now “standard practice at all the major

network news operations,” *The New York Times* reported.

Sauter committed virtual heresy when, as general manager of public television station KVIE in Sacramento—after leaving network news—he suggested public broadcasting would be better off without any—zero—government support, relying instead on private and commercial funding.

Today, however, that once-heretic notion is being debated seriously.

Although an imposing, bulky 250 pounds and six feet tall, Sauter is known and acknowledged by few patrons during his regular stops in Ketchum at Cristina’s for breakfast and the Rustic Moose for lunch, or dinner at one of several favorites between Bellevue and Ketchum.

Even at 71, and with a few annoying health drawbacks that invite one of his signature wisecracks (“If doctors say you’re

healthy, that means they haven’t done enough tests”), Sauter is doggedly not retired, either in body or mind. His encyclopedic range of interests continues to fuel strongly held opinions and pithy one-liners (one writer described Sauter’s style as “raffishly flamboyant”).

Gone but not forgotten as a tower in broadcast news, Sauter continues to receive requests for speeches, invitations to write newspaper and magazine opinion pieces and lend expert hands to groups’ programs. Incongruously, he even was chairman of the California boxing commission for several years (boxing is a favorite spectator sport for him).

Although a Ketchum booster, he nevertheless holds harsh views of the town’s changing character. Ketchum is home between July and November,

**“The Wood River Valley, as it is revered and remembered and celebrated, is gone.”**

“the best days of the year,” he muses. He and his wife of 26 years, Kathleen Brown—an on-the-go executive with the Goldman Sachs financial house—also have an 11th floor high-rise in Los Angeles’ Wilshire Corridor they share with a corgi named Sutter (“insufferably arrogant and self-reverential,” Sauter claims of the dog), and another home in more rural Rancho Mirage, California.

When in California, Sauter favors what he calls East Coast formality in attire. But he gives Ketchum casual unmistakable elegance, too. His owl-eyed, brindle-rimmed glasses add a touch of chic.

**“If, say,  
Pat Robertson  
is a 10 and  
MoveOn/Michael  
Moore/Blaine  
County are a 1,  
I am a  
determined 8.”**

Famous he may be, but no McMansion digs for this ex-tycoon. Sauter’s genuinely rustic Ketchum home, built in 1976, is a relatively small main wooden house and two cabins on three acres, tucked amid beautifully kept heavy landscaping and a forest of trees in the Gimlet area. The interior is ideal for kick-back country informality when visiting with Sauter and prodding him into yeasty reminiscences.

In characteristically wry, if not acerbic, Sauter style, he describes how he discovered Ketchum and bought a home. “Suffering the claustrophobia and vulgarity of Los Angeles,” he recalled, “I cast about for a getaway closer to fishing and rural ambiance,” mentioning Montana or New Mexico as possible haunts. Meanwhile, his wife came to Sun Valley for an all-girls weekend with friends. “Ever the chauvinist, I presumed it would be a thoroughly benign weekend in terms of

impact on my life—just some nifty women sitting around drinking good wine and laughing hysterically at their maladroit men.” Brown, 60, is famous in her own right: She’s the former California state treasurer, an unsuccessful candidate for California governor, daughter of former California Gov. Pat Brown and sister of former California Gov. Jerry Brown, whom Sauter admires for “going through a life transformation” since becoming the serious-minded mayor of Oakland and shaking the sarcastic sobriquet of “Governor Moonbeam.”

Instead, as Sauter recalled, his wife called from Sun Valley and told him to discontinue the search: She found the perfect hideaway in Ketchum.

So it seems. Sauter’s lifestyle is a total departure from days as a towering titan in television. For the past 10 July 4th holidays, he’s led a backcountry holiday expedition for 20 to 30 friends along the Lewis and Clark trail.

How does a man who spent hundreds of millions of dollars to entertain and inform millions of nightly TV viewers occupy his days? He reads *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, plus eight or nine Internet news sites, each day—“from the scurri- lous to the penetrating.”

He wrote a novel (unpublished because “I’m too shy to start finding an agent”) about a notorious Los Angeles murder. He has a yen for movies. He’s participated in the Sun Valley Writers’ Conference (a founder, Reva Tooley, is a family friend). He wanders banks of the Big Wood River searching for fishing spots. Perhaps surprising, Sauter rarely watches television (more on that in a moment).

Despite “a heart that doesn’t pump as well as the doctors would like” and resembling, he says, a planned-obsolescence 1935 Packard automobile, Sauter scouts the region for interesting places. “My favorite is Elko, Nevada—gritty, funky, tough, real, close to the beauty of the Ruby Mountains.”

As a concession to health, he chews rather than smokes \$17 Monte Cristo No. 2 cigars. Life in Los Angeles is less simple than Ketchum. He has a driver (“my one indulgence”) to navigate that town’s combative traffic. He works out in a gym daily “because my doctors said I had to.”

As if to punctuate the absurdity he feels for strenuous workouts, and those addicted to no-pain-no-gain regimens, Sauter said he once was a neighbor of the frenzied fitness fanatic, Richard Simmons—“he could hear me opening a bag of potato chips.”

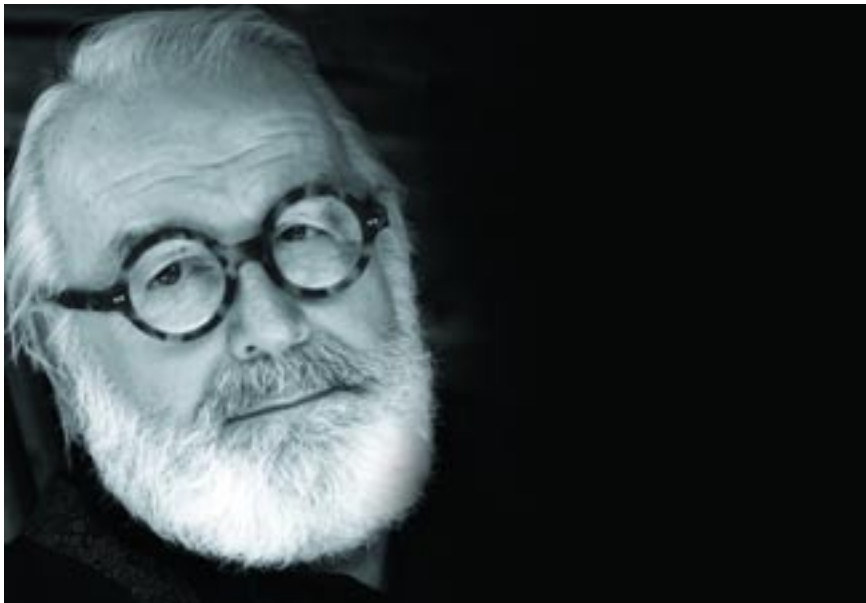
Sauter’s gift for words led to his marriage. Brown, then a member of the Los Angeles School Board, was offended by a Sauter editorial on the local CBS station, noting its members (“chronic bed-wetters and mystical social engineers,” in Sauter’s words) had banned candy bars from cafeterias, but students carried guns or knives. They met over dinner to discuss the editorial. He instead told her he would marry her.

On a recent afternoon, Sauter sat with the *Sun Valley Guide* for an easy-flowing, spontaneous conversation on topics ranging from A (news anchors on TV) to Z (zest for life as a young newspaper reporter).

■ **His politics:** “If, say, Pat Robertson is a 10 and MoveOn/Michael Moore/Blaine County are a 1, I am a determined 8. While I know few liberals who ever vote Republican, I frequently vote for Democrats. (His wife is a Truman-style Democrat, but, Sauter says, “like all good marriages, we know where the pain points are, and we never go there.”)

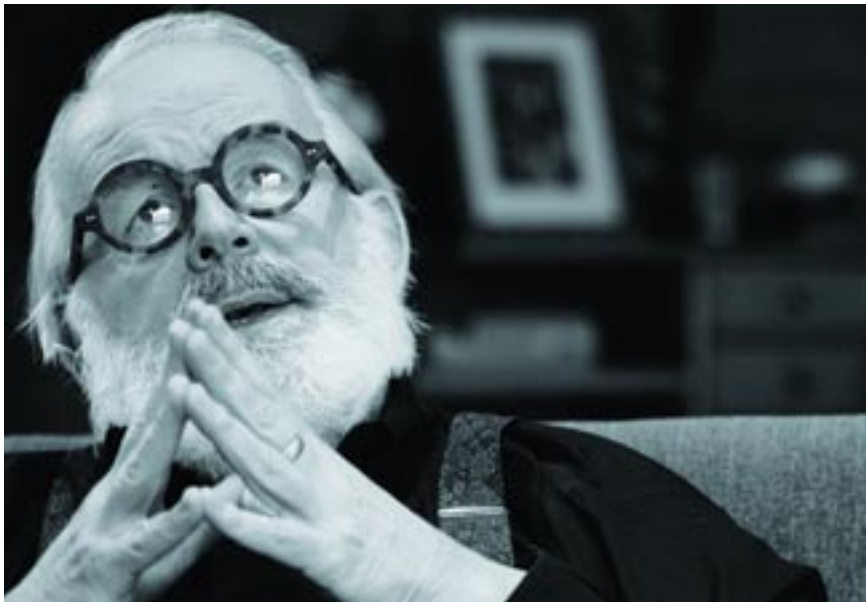
■ **Journalism roots:** “I will always be overwhelmed with nostalgia for my newspaper days (in Massachusetts, Detroit and Chicago). Reporters were randy, drunk, unencumbered by mortgages and wives...(That) inevitably led to a lot of reprehensible though keenly enjoyable behavior. What carefree days!” He co-authored two books: *Nightmare in Detroit*, about the 1967 riots, and *Fabled Land, Timeless River*, a photo-text book about the Mississippi River.

■ **The past:** “I don’t miss anything about my prior jobs. Nothing. They were great fun and occasionally had true consequence. But sloth and self-indulgence are highly appropriate and celebrated qualities at this stage of life. I don’t have a lot of friends from the ‘old’ days. A lot of that is geography. I’ve just moved away from those worlds. I’m a ‘former’—someone professionally irrelevant and socially mildewed.”



■ **TV ideology:** “Network television news and the major papers tilt to the left of center. The overwhelming majority of journalists vote Democratic and most are liberal. Keep in mind the network organizations and major papers are housed in cities that are overwhelmingly Democratic. And liberal. By the standards of Blaine County, these journalists are right in the middle of the political spectrum.”

■ **Dan Rather:** “While our professional relationship fell apart, I have kept a personal relationship with Rather. Rather was a hawk on breaking stories. Tenacious. But he needed, at times, adult supervision. He ultimately got himself in rough water where he shouldn’t have been. It was sad. Incidentally, I have fished with Rather and (now-retired NBC anchor Tom) Brokaw. They are excellent.”



■ **Watching TV:** “I watch very little television, except for movies and boxing cards. And the NFL playoffs. I adore the *Sopranos* and am now addicted to 24. I watch just enough television news to stay current with the form, but not one iota more. A certain amount of contemporary television drama, and to a certain degree, comedy, is to me in close contact with the realities of society. That is healthy and results in an attractive relevance. On the other hand, a lot of television is crude and sophomoric. It can’t all be great.”

■ **Viewers:** “We as viewers need to be proactive in viewing decisions. What we really need to be is deeply involved in what our children and grandchildren watch. Those decisions should not devolve to cereal manufacturers and toy makers and clever programmers.”



■ **Top journalists:** “*New York Times* columnist David Brooks—non-doctrinaire, incredibly intellectual, spots trends. *Times* columnist Tom Friedman—focuses his thinking. NBC *Meet the Press* moderator Tim Russert has a great sense of gathering information and pushing it out to people. Tom Brokaw, one of the best reporters and journalists. Fox News founder Rupert Murdoch and CBS founder Bill Paley: two of the most remarkable men.”

■ **Katie Couric:** “While Couric was the only choice for CBS News, she was a very good choice. It will take several weeks to a few months for her and the broadcast to

*Continued on page 99*

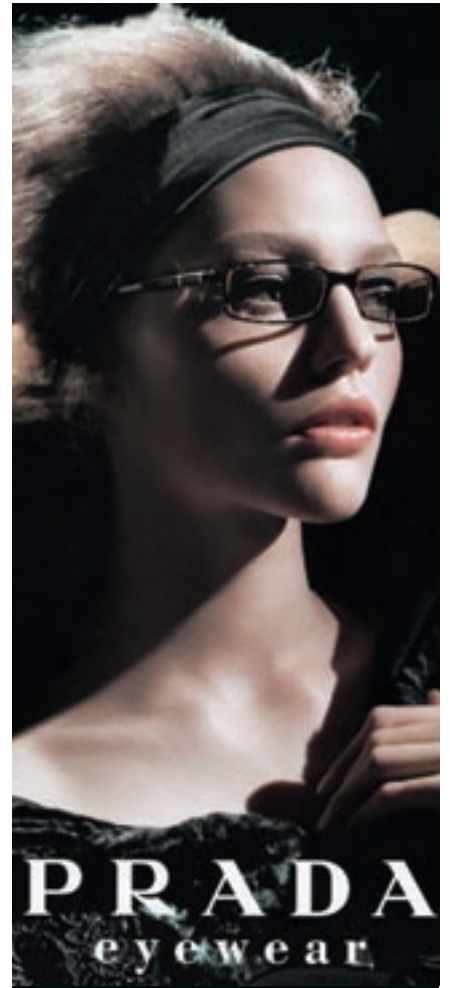


Life is a highway weaving through the magnificent and varied panoramas of the West. In this short story, [Greg Stahl](#) explores a slice of highway striped with the staggered staccato of uncertain love. Photo by [Greg Stahl](#).





He squinted through the dusty front window, choking back tears, and watched as the Smoky Mountains grew with the miles. His reply was delayed and, when it came, deliberate. He would not reveal his feelings. He had known her for a very short time, and he considered the unexpected burst of emotion premature.



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When he looked at her to answer the question, hoping his glistening eyes didn't show, he analyzed his response for clarity and meaning. As the answers came, he understood the tears. They were thoughts he couldn't share with her. To tell her would be too much. She couldn't possibly understand how thoughts like these could emerge from such a brief slice of such a long life.

He looked to the highway tumbling out before them, and she put her hand on his leg. He covered it with his own. He could see in her eyes she had been touched by his answer. Perhaps she heard what he hadn't said. She had an uncanny brain and a logically intuitive sense about things. It's one of the qualities he loved most about her.

"The same could be said about you," she replied.

It was an appropriately diplomatic response, but the words he uttered fit her far better than he. Though their miles and hours traveling together were filled with far-reaching ideas and many words, they drove on in silence for a while. His mind worked.

Like a man who wants flight, he could not have her, for the very object of desire was the obstacle to its realization. He mused that he was a tree who wanted to grow at the summit of a great mountain with views spreading to the horizons. He would be the first to see the sun rise and the last to see the moon set. But trees don't grow on the tops of mountains for a reason.

In life, it is often the thing a person cannot have that a person wants the most. That is how he distilled a rainbow of growing sensation into shades of gray. It was a fatalis-

tic exercise precipitated by his awe and respect for her.

That admiration was the fuel for their brief but intimate conversation as the Smoky Mountains grew on the horizon in the late-day sun of the Snake River Plain. His mind returned to the question that prompted the unexpected tears.

"What are your expectations of me?" she had asked.

He contemplated the question before the weight of his answer settled on him.

"I expect you to use your powers for good, not evil," he answered, the idea solidifying in his mind.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

That's when he stared out the side window and watched through bleary eyes as the desert flew by. He could not immediately answer. He could not let her know how much the answer hurt him.

"I think you are an incredibly gifted person," he said. "I expect you to put your gifts to good use."

In that, he realized, he would push her away for the very reason he loved her. He viewed himself as a diversion to her eventual greatness.

Their conversations had begun simply enough. She was bright, and she wanted people to know it. Despite her hubris, he liked her and found her easy to talk with. On their third encounter they lay awake on a cabin floor in front of a dying fire as the stars spun overhead. He wanted to kiss her, but he did not, and he supposed those events would dictate the extent of their relationship. He was moving to a town across the barren, windswept desert. It was not the time to make new friends.

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Life didn't agree.

When he looked across a crowded patio the following evening and saw her beaming at him from a corner where she sat alone, he was surprised at his excitement. Their conversation later that night dug beneath the surface, and he shed a bit of the shell he used to protect himself. Later, as they lay awake together, he told her how he had wanted to hold her in front of the dying fire on the cabin floor.

"I think you think too much," she told him, and her kiss was full of feeling.

In that moment, he lost a friend.

During the ensuing week, they laid plans to travel across the vast expanse of the varied western landscape. He thought it was funny when she asked if he was worried she might be a schizophrenic whose alter ego could kick in somewhere on the long, lonesome road. They talked about traveling companions they had known. They worried that, somewhere between the Colorado Plateau and the granite ramparts of Central Idaho, they might run out of things to talk about. They thought the vast landscape might swallow their thoughts and ideas. It wasn't so. They hardly noticed the power of the western desert as they drove into each other's thoughts and feelings.

He took a glance in the rear view mirror and saw the empty highway unfolding behind them. Seeing where they had been only moments before, he thought about the lives they had not yet lived in the context of how they would view them from times yet to pass. He answered the question for himself.

The life he had yet to live would look good so long as he had a positive effect on a few people, made a difference every now and then. His deathbed memories would be happy as long as they flashed across his mind like a slide show of smiling faces, people he cared about and people who cared in return. All the rest—ledger sheets, awards, resumes, accomplishments—was all filler, the nine-to-five hours of a life that included so much more. He turned the thought to his companion.

"At the end of your life, when you're looking back, what do you want to see?"

Moments of silence ensued as he pondered his infraction and she considered the question.

"Maybe I'll see this trip," she smirked.

Maybe, he thought, her sarcasm weighing on him.

Days later, he was surprised by the abrupt way their courses diverged. She had become an easy fit in that short period of his life, and it didn't seem natural that something so easy would have an end. Even as he drove her to the place they would part, he felt invigorated by her, and her company gave him strength he didn't know he possessed. She asked if he wanted to ask a question he had, days earlier, declined to risk. The time was right, but he decided the answer would come with time. With that, they bid farewell.

But his question would be answered. Several months and many trials later, it was.

And the lonely Idaho mountains consumed him. ❧

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Glen Edwards, Free Ride Oil, 16" x 20"

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Nancy Stonington, Mt. Shuksan Giclee print, 40" x 28"

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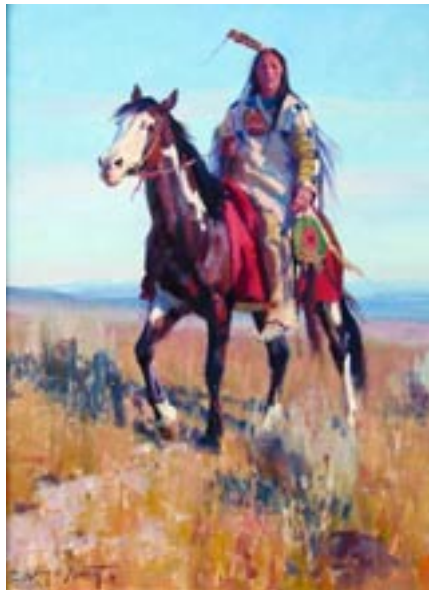
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Kim Keever, *Summer: Blue, Yellow and Gray*, 2004  
Chromogenic print, 35"x 45"  
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Lynn Toneri, *Chinook Spawning*  
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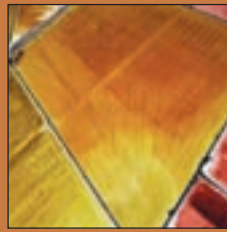


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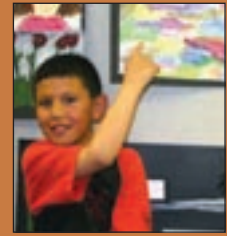
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David Maisei, Terminal Midge #247-3, 2003. Courtesy Von Lintel Gallery



Turtle Island, photo: Peter Serling



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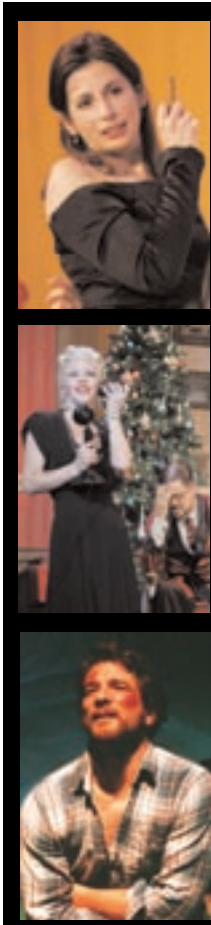
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Snowy March Evening, Lithograph, 34" x 45"

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from page 43

more expensive and that doesn't help the price perception. Sure there's a \$49.99 bottle of olive oil. But there's also a \$2.19 gallon of milk. We've battled that perception forever."

## Change is coming

Growth throughout the valley brings changes for residents and businesses alike. An increase in second-home owners, soaring rents due to high property values and diminished retail activity as year-round residents move south have led the city of Ketchum to make downtown revitalization a priority. In the downtown master plan, adopted by the City Council in September 2006, goals of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, an enhanced transportation system and increased affordable housing were set forth.

The ideas of beautification and incentives for people to live and work downtown would, in theory, boost Ketchum's economy and enliven the city core. "The town is growing so quickly, and we have big plans," said Ketchum Mayor Randy Hall. Issues such as parking, congestion and foot traffic that the city is working on may

## Competition

The opening of Boise-based Albertsons in 2002 took a bite out of Atkinsons' business. "It hurt," said owner Chip Atkinson. "But, it was kind of what we expected. The people who really got hurt were Valley Market and Williams Market. Those two stores' customer bases switched more. 70 percent of our customers I consider very loyal." Indeed, competition has existed in myriad forms up and down the valley corridor throughout Atkinsons' history. In 1925, brothers Oscar

**70 percent of our customers I consider very loyal."**

**Chip Atkinson**

and Albert Griffith opened a food and outfitting operation on Main Street. In 1937, the Griffith family sold the store to Olie Glenn, whose family named the grocery store the Golden Rule. The Glens relocated to a new, larger site on the opposite side of Main Street in 1981. After the Golden Rule closed, the store was leased



photo by Kevin Syms

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affect Atkinsons' future in Giacobbi Square. "There are some impacts the downtown master plan will have on Atkinsons', but as long as it stays where it's at, we have to learn to live with each other."

The Atkinsons, for their part, believe the downtown is enhanced by their store's presence and, at this point, don't plan to move. "This isn't the center because it feels good," Chip said. "It feels good because this is where all the activity is. Would this be the core if Atkinsons' or Jane's were down at the Simplot lot? We understand our role, and we understand our role in the congestion. We're going to try to address some of the impacts. It's time for a facelift. But if we were to move, it would be a disaster."

From his second-floor office window, Tom Pyle can't see the cars darting in and out of parking spaces, or any of the activity outside. What he can see are reminders of his career, one that rivals most people's in length and loyalty.

"People say, 'How did you do it all these years?' There's something exciting going on here every day. I don't think you'd work at a company so long if the people weren't good to work with. It's fun to come to work. It's been a long haul, but it's been fun." 

## is healthy

to successive grocers: Safeway, Farmer Jack, Perron's Market and, finally, Williams Market. "That was all since 1983," said Chip.

Chris Williams leased the former Perron's Market site on Main Street in the early 1990s. Business was brisk until September 2001, when the economy stumbled after the terrorist attacks on the East Coast. That event was followed by Albertsons' opening in Hailey and an exodus of residents to the south valley. No longer were so many shoppers strolling Williams Market's aisles. The family business closed in 2005.

Despite the southward migration not all Hailey grocers fared well. On March 27, 2002, the same day the new Hailey Albertsons opened, Paul Zatica, owner of Paul's Market, submitted two applications to the city of Hailey for a new store. His plans were rejected, and the store, which had been on Main Street since the late 1980s, closed in spring 2003. The opening of Valley Market in 1996 created Bellevue's largest grocery store. However, within six years they sold to Atkinsons'. Now, only chainstore giant Albertsons and Atkinsons' remain to battle for market share.

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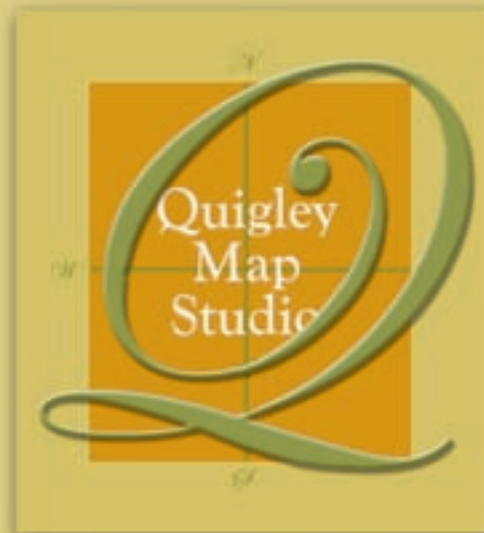
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## the art of bread

As it emerges, bruised and battered from nearly a decade of belittlement, the art of bread making is returning to the center of the nation's quest for nourishment.

**Michael Ames** investigates the ongoing fight to bring honor back to an ancient food. Photos by **Paulette Philipot**.

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Of all foods to be demonized, bread seemed an unlikely target. But, following the low-fat craze and the whole grains craze, Americans discovered that many of them were still fat. And so a new scapegoat was needed. Bread, the food of the ancient Egyptians, the food and body of Christ, the bread of life, was framed.

The surreal genius of Dr. Atkins' low-carb craze led health-seekers into a dietary Twilight Zone, the lingering side affects of which have yet to vanish. Low-carb menu options gave way to low-carb food brands.

A double-bacon-cheeseburger, hold the bun, was suddenly the healthy option. Fields of wheat? The nation's breadbasket? Forget it, the diet gurus said. Bread is dead.

For many, the notion was foolish from the start. While pasta and bread companies scrambled to survive, artisanal bakers persevered, confident in their product.

In the Wood River Valley, where long, cold winters require consistent energy loading, bread bowls did not disappear from under chili or chowder. Here, where many people consider nutrition a hobby, wheat and grain never died. In fact, this cozy small town harbored and fed those bakers, and, as the low-carb fad dies its well-deserved death, bread making is enjoying the renaissance of the perfect loaf.

## A belief in bread

Art Wallace believes in bread. Do not trifle with him on the subject. Don't try jokes or word play—his mood will not rise. He is a bread fundamentalist. As owner and founder of Ketchum's Bigwood Bread, Wallace believes bread, when made properly, is good and right and necessary; and bread, when misunderstood, is an abomination.

He fell for bread in the south of

France. He was baking organic pain au levain in a wood-fired oven and became enchanted by the purist ethic of artisan bread. Today, he doesn't consider his breads specifically European or even derivational. "People come in and ask me if we make French bread, and I say, 'We make Idaho bread.'" The bakery's Idaho bread is

crusty, not doughy. It is simple bread, made from ancient methods. There is flour, there is water and there is salt. "If there is anything more than that, it better have a purpose—maybe an olive, or some nuts or seeds," said Wallace. "Anything more and you are pushing it to something that isn't bread. It's gross."

This bread looks, feels and smells different. A sandwich on it is an altered entity. Not tidy or even square. It's a game of chance: messy, risky and totally worth the payoff.

Wallace and his bakery manager, Jason Pitek, point to the industrial revolution

as the culprit in bread's modern ruin. Today, whether it's the prevalence of wheat intolerance or the inanity of the low-carb confusion, these bakers can trace a line back to the mechanization of bread making.

With the advent of railroad travel, it was suddenly possible for bread-makers to ship high quantities of loaves around the country. The Pullman Loaf was the first of these pan breads; easily stacked, the rectangular loaves were perfect for feeding the expanding country by rail.

But pan bread led to an abandonment of thousands of years of leavening history. Using more refined and even bleached flour, oxidizing the dough through extensive mixing, and adding sugar and yeast, factory bakeries created easily transportable, longer lasting sandwich bread. The bread with smaller "crumb" and sweeter flavor did not turn stale so

**This type of bread looks, feels and smells different. A sandwich on it is an altered entity. Not tidy or even square. It's a game of chance: messy, risky and totally worth the payoff.**



**Bigwood Bread's Jason Pitek** weighs, pummels, folds and paints his creations as they go through the process of turning from flour and water into an aromatic, tastebud-tantalizing loaf of "Idaho" bread.



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Many artisanal breadmakers believe that today's prevalence of wheat and gluten intolerance is a result of industrialized processing of wheat and grain.

quickly. For a young, hungry country, this was progress. From the hindsight of a food purist, it was shifting into reverse. The tragic result of the Pullman Loaf was Wonder Bread.

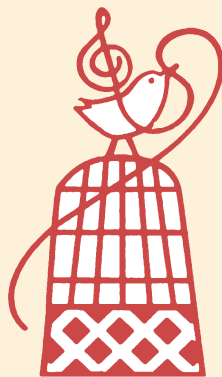
## The Baker's Oven

Pitek is Bigwood's mad scientist of bread. His chemistry was ingrained as a child in Grants Pass, Oregon, where his parents owned a bakery for 22 years. In Ketchum, he has found a home for his own bread philosophies. "You can't get better than this. I have no desire to make any other sort of bread than this," he says while sliding a fresh vat of dough onto a large butcher's table for cutting and weighing. The glutinous mass—about two square feet—of raw, wet dough has a life-like quality. As Pitek pulls and saws hunks, the mass stretches slowly, then retracts with a quick pullback. "The bread is both extensible and elastic," he casually observes.

Once cut and weighed, the dough is ready for the oven. Wallace feels that, in any bakery, the oven serves more than a mere utilitarian purpose. More than the fridge where raw dough is set to ferment, more than the endless rows of cooling racks, the oven defines a bakery. The oven is the centerpiece not just of the business, but also of the baker's role in the community. In many towns and cities across the world, both



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today and throughout history, when the rolls emerge from the ovens, the lines quickly form. Bread serves as a comfort food, the sticky gluten literally a conduit for sharing, meeting and eating together.

But for countless Americans today, ask them where their bread comes from, and they will answer “the supermarket.” Today’s industrial food system does not resemble Bigwood Bread any more than it resembles a stone oven in a North African village. And in the face of overwhelming competition from companies like Pepperidge Farms, Wallace feels bakeries like his are fighting the good, ethical fight against this country’s mechanized system of food creation, distribution and consumption.

Many artisanal breadmakers believe that today’s prevalence of wheat and gluten intolerance is a result of industrialized processing of wheat and grain. Whole-wheat flour is refined and bleached, and with each step, the nutritional value of the wheat berry is reduced. “Enriched flour” used in many supermarket brands is simply flour with nutrients added to replace those extracted during processing. In retrospect, it’s easy to see the subtle follies of progress.

## A simple loaf

Locally, the low-carb movement was never more than a peripheral fad. There is simply too much calorie-burning going on in these mountains. Without a compact, dense loaf of Simple Kneads black bread in your pack, the hiker’s triumphant mountain top meal wouldn’t be the same. Mari Wania is the baker behind Simple Kneads, another mainstay of the Wood River Valley’s carb culture. Her dense, calorie-rich breads are perfect for pocket sandwiches on the ski lift, or just tearing into at the dinner table. And with options ranging from spelt to Austrian peasant bread, Wania’s selections are varied and constantly changing.

For many here, connection to the land is more than an empty slogan. It’s one of the unique attributes of living in this valley, and is part of what draws talented artisan foodies like Wania, Wallace and Pitek. Neighbors like them turn food philosophies into reality and one of man’s ancient foods back into a daily rite. 



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chef's specialty \_\_\_\_\_

# Chandler's Hawaiian ahi tuna



**Keith Otter tops his new creation, the Tower of Tuna, with its main ingredient.**



Keith Otter, executive chef of Chandler's, divulges the secrets behind the restaurant's signature dish. Words by Jennifer Tuohy. Photos by Paulette Phlipot.

Longevity is almost a dirty word in Ketchum's restaurant scene; establishments open and close as often as Exhibition Lift on a windy day. But, tucked away in a secluded corner of Ketchum, one of the city's longest continually operating restaurants keeps defying the odds.

The team behind Chandler's, Rex Chandler and Keith Otter, have worked together for 25 years. Otter started his career as a dishwasher in Chandler's Newport Beach restaurant, The Rex. In 1994, Chandler brought Otter with him to Idaho, with the promise of starting "a great little restaurant, specializing in Pacific Northwest cuisine, backed up with our seafood and a good wine list."

Accustomed to seafood on tap in their previous locations, Southern California and Hawaii, life in Idaho's mountains was a rude awakening for the beach boys. "In those days it was almost impossible to get fresh seafood here," said Chandler. "For our first New Year's Eve, we ordered a big, whole ahi tuna. It wound up sitting on a dock somewhere in Chicago." Today, getting their hands on the finest of fish is a little easier. "A good friend, Stu Siedman, started Mountain Pride, a seafood purveyor here; they have made the restaurant business here much more palatable."

And while Otter may have briefly traveled down his own path (the Idaho-French restaurant, Otters, opened in 1997 and closed in 2000) the restaurant's signature dish, Hawaiian ahi tuna, has been a staple on Chandler's menu since day one. Otter attributes the dish's success to the fish's universality. "Tuna goes with almost all the wine varieties you can think of: chardonnay, merlot, cabernet, pinot noir. It matches up with almost anything you pair it with. Plus people like it because it's lean and so healthy."


Served Chandler's-style, the ahi steak is seared rare and encrusted in sesame seeds. When sliced, it presents an attractive cross view that contrasts the black of the sesame seed crust with

the deep red of the fish's flesh. To achieve this perfect balance Otter ensures the tuna is seared evenly. "You've got to sear all four sides, but not the end pieces, for two to three minutes, to get a little well-done circle around the whole fish and the rareness in the middle. There has to be the textural balance there, something crispy versus something rare and cold." The tuna is accompanied by ginger wasabi potato puree and draped with a sauce that Otter describes as a Japanese "beurre blanc."

The lasting success of the ahi dish recently prompted Otter to introduce a new tuna-based starter to the restaurant. "The Tower of Tuna is about a month old," he said. "It was inspired by my last Napa Valley wine trip." A feast for the eyes as well as the mouth, The Tower consists of colorful ingredients stacked and layered in a feat of food engineering. "I use a stainless steel ring to get the shape. I put avocado down first, then a little small layer of tomato, a small layer of hamachi, a little fried rice and then the ahi on the very top. So you end up with four good colors all segmented and layered up. Then I take the ring off and drizzle it with two sauces."

The inception of The Tower is a prelude to Chandler's and Otter's newest endeavor: a foray into the Boise restaurant scene. The new Chandler's in Boise opens this March.

"Initially, the main focus will be on our steaks and prime meats," said Chandler. "And then we'll subtly bring our seafood to the fore. We are also developing 'large small plates,' which are appetizers meant to be shared—such as our Tower of Tuna. In fact, all of the new dishes we are creating here at Chandler's right now are designed to be the prototypes of what we'll be doing in Boise."

"Keith and I have worked as a team for a long time now," continued Chandler. "We've developed several concepts together and I have a lot of confidence in his palette and his ability to assemble great food. I think we're going to make a great team down in Boise." 

## Hawaiian ahi tuna



### Ingredients

Serves 6

Six 5-ounce portions of Sashimi grade ahi tuna

1/2 cup of black sesame seeds,  
1/4 sesame seed oil, combined

### Wasabe mashed potatoes:

3 medium sized russet potatoes,  
1 tsp garlic, 1/2 cup cream, 1 Tbsp  
butter, 1 tsp grated ginger, 1 tsp  
wasabe powder, salt and white  
pepper to taste. **Sauce:** 2 cups

sake, 1 tsp grated ginger, 1 tsp  
coriander seeds, 1 Tbsp chopped  
shallots, 4 black peppercorns, 1/2 tsp  
crushed red chillies, 1 tsp soy sauce,  
8 oz. butter. **Garnishes:** Roasted  
garlic cloves, sautéed sliced shitake  
mushrooms, finely diced tomatoes.

**Salad:** Watercress and cilantro.

**Dressing:** 1/4 cup soy sauce, 1/4  
cup rice wine vinegar, 1 tsp sesame  
seed oil, 1 squeeze of lime juice.

### Directions

To make the sauce, place ginger, coriander, shallots, peppercorns and red chili flakes in a saucepan, then cover with sake. Cook over medium heat and reduce by 75 percent.

Turn down flame and blend in whole butter. Set aside in a warm spot.

Make the mashed potatoes, mix the dressing and salad and set aside.

Pre-heat sauté pan on medium heat. Coat each portion of tuna with seed mixture, covering all sides. Pan sear tuna for one minute on each side, then slice into 1/8 inch medallions.

Place potato mixture in the middle of each plate. Place tuna slices around potatoes, toss salad mixture and place on top of tuna, heat sauce with garnishes and spoon around each plate.

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Globus	Casually elegant gourmet Asian fare with an eclectic wine list	726-1301
Ketchum Grill	Contemporary American cuisine with Idaho flavors	726-4660
Michel's Christiania	Traditional French cuisine with a full-service Olympic Bar	726-3388
The Sawtooth Club	Mesquite grilled meats, seafood, pastas & salads	726-5233
<b>STEAK &amp; SEAFOOD</b>		
Full Moon Steakhouse	Steak, fresh fish, prime rib sandwiches & great wines	788-5912
Pioneer Saloon	If you haven't been to the Pio, you haven't been to Ketchum	726-3139
The Sawtooth Club	Mesquite grilled meats, seafood, pastas & salads	726-5233
The Roosevelt Tavern	Grilled meats & seafood plus interpretations of comfort foods	726-0051
<b>ITALIAN &amp; PIZZA</b>		
Baci Italian Cafe	Italian café & wine bar. Casual fine dining at its best!	726-8384
Ciro Restaurant & Wine Bar	Good food for all. #1 simple seasonal food, family friendly	727-1800
Cristina's Restaurant & Bakery	Simple...good...organic...civilized food	726-4499
daVinci's	Classic Italian & American cuisine, daily pasta specials	788-7699
Rosina's	Authentic Italian cuisine prepared by an Italian	726-4444
<b>MEXICAN</b>		
Desperado's	Classic Mexican cuisine, fresh fish specials daily	726-3068
<b>ASIAN</b>		
Osaka Sushi	Japanese sushi cuisine, daily specials	726-6999
Sushi on Second	The best restaurant for fresh seafood & sushi. Nightly specials	726-5181
<b>ORGANIC &amp; SPECIALTY</b>		
Akasha Organics	Organic food, produce and supplements	726-4777
Ciro Restaurant & Wine Bar	Good food for all. #1 simple seasonal food, family friendly	727-1800
Ciro Market & Wine Merchants	Don't cook tonight. Meals to go, wine, cheese & specialty items	727-1800
Ketchum Grill	Contemporary American cuisine with Idaho flavors	726-4660
<b>CAFÉ &amp; DELI &amp; BAKERY</b>		
Ciro Market & Wine Merchants	Don't cook tonight. Meals to go, wine, cheese & specialty items	727-1800
Cristina's Restaurant & Bakery	Simple...good...organic...civilized food	726-4499
Perry's	Great breakfasts, soup, sandwiches & grill selections. All to go!	726-7703
<b>BURGERS</b>		
Lefty's Bar & Grill	Killer burgers, hot sandwiches, salads and cold beer.	726-2744

See map on page 97  
for restaurant locations

LOCATION	PRICE	Deck Dining	Reservations	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Cocktails	Beer-Wine	Entertainment	Catering	Credit Cards	Take-out
200 S. Main St., Trail Cr. Village, Ketchum	\$\$\$	●	●			●	●				●	●
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
Corner of Pine & Main Street, Hailey	\$\$	●	●			●	●			●	●	
520 2nd Street E., Ketchum	\$\$	●	●	●	●						●	●
380 1st Avenue N., Ketchum	\$\$\$		●			●	●				●	
291 6th St. and Main Street, Ketchum	\$\$		●			●	●			●	●	●
520 East Avenue, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●			●	●	
Sun Valley Rd. & Walnut Ave., Ketchum	\$\$\$	●	●			●	●	●	●		●	
231 N. Main Street, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●	●			●	●
118 S. Main Street, Bellevue	\$\$	●	●			●	●			●	●	●
320 N. Main Street, Ketchum	\$\$					●	●	●			●	
231 N. Main Street, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●	●			●	●
280 N. Main Street, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●	●		●	●	●
200 S. Main St., Trail Cr. Village, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●				●	●
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
520 2nd Street, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●	●	●						●	●
17 W. Bullion Street, Hailey	\$\$	●	●			●	●				●	●
511 Leadville Avenue, Ketchum	\$\$		●			●	●			●	●	●
211 4th Street, Ketchum	\$				●	●	●				●	●
The Courtyard, East Avenue, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
260 Second Street, Ketchum	\$\$		●			●	●			●	●	●
Chapter One Bookstore, Main St., Ketchum	\$\$			●	●	●				●	●	●
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
520 East Avenue, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●			●	●			●	●	
Walnut Avenue Mall, Ketchum	\$\$	●			●	●	●			●	●	●
520 2nd Street, Ketchum	\$\$	●	●	●	●						●	●
4th Street and First Avenue, Ketchum	\$	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
231 6th Street E., Ketchum	\$	●			●	●	●	●			●	●

\$.....entrées \$10 & under  
 \$\$...entrées \$11 – 20  
 \$\$\$..entrées \$21 & up



Downtown Ketchum  
At Its Best!



Cocktails • Eclectic Wine List  
 Apres Ski by the Fire starts at 4pm  
 Dinner Served Nightly from 5pm

Reservations Accepted  
**726-0051**

CORNER OF MAIN ST. & SUN VALLEY RD.

# Smoky Mountain

## PIZZA & PASTA

### **FUN PLACE, SERIOUSLY GOOD FOOD!**

Nine locations to serve you.

Monday – Thursday 11:00am-9:00pm  
 Friday & Saturday 11:00am-10:00pm  
 Sunday 12:00pm-9:00pm

Happy Hour – Monday thru Friday 3:00pm-5:30pm

Take out and delivery available at all locations

All of our restaurants specialize in catering  
 No order is too big or too small

Parking facilities – free parking at all of our restaurants

Appetizer specials during Happy Hour

Patio dining – perfect during the warm months



If you are one of those people who still believes in the importance of having your family dine together, then Smoky Mountain is just the place. We offer full table service at a reasonable price with a menu designed to offer a great choice to family members of all ages. Our menu includes a great selection of appetizers, salads and sandwiches as well as traditional and specialty pizzas and pastas. The kids can have great fun building their own pizza from a wide selection of toppings while mom and dad will appreciate our fresh, crisp salads and selection of beers and wines. The entire family is sure to go for our luscious desserts. Our relaxed atmosphere, especially on the patio, also makes us a great place to take a date or enjoy lunch with friends or business associates.

#### **Ketchum**

200 Sun Valley Road  
 Ketchum, ID 83340  
 208-622-5625

#### **Eagle**

34 E. State St.  
 Eagle, ID 83616  
 208-939-0212

#### **Meridian**

980 East Fairview Ave.  
 Meridian, ID 83642  
 208-884-1067

#### **State Street**

1805 W. State St.  
 Boise, ID 83702  
 208-387-2727



#### **Parkcenter**

415 E. Parkcenter Blvd.  
 Boise, ID 83706  
 208-429-0011

#### **Nampa**

2007 N. Cassia  
 Nampa, ID 83651  
 208-461-7333

#### **Mountain Home**

1465 American Legion Blvd.  
 Mountain Home, ID 83647  
 208-587-2840

#### **Sandy**

1850 East 9400 South  
 Sandy, UT 84093  
 801-523-7070



## Casual Fine Dining At Its Best

Featuring fresh, handmade pastas, gourmet pizzas and daily specials of fresh and prime meats.

Over 30 wines available by the glass.

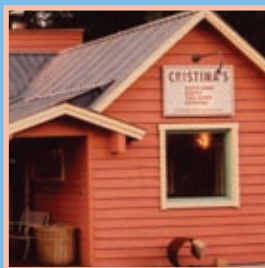
Dinner served 7 nights a week.

**208.726.8384**

Trail Creek Village  
200 South Main St. • Ketchum

## CRISTINA'S RESTAURANT & BAKERY

TAKEOUT • CATERING  
Breakfast • Lunch • Sunday Brunch



520 Second Street East, Ketchum. Open for breakfast, lunch, takeout, catering, bakery, tea, and coffee Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sunday brunch from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and occasional dinners. 208.726.4499.



208.788.1223 ♦ 320 S Main, Hailey



Open Nightly @ 5pm  
Real Food, Hand-Made, In-House.  
Eat Here, Eat Well.  
We Also Cater.



**Great Breakfasts!**



**Soup & Sandwiches!**



**Grill Selections!**

**Full Breakfast Menu! Fresh Bakery All Day!  
Muffins, Cookies, Great Sandwiches, Burgers, Fries,  
Salads, Espresso and Coffee Drinks!**

**See our complete menu in the restaurant section  
of Names & Numbers phone book!**

**Call ahead and we'll have it ready for you!**

**EVERYTHING AVAILABLE TO GO, too!**

*Complimentary Wireless Internet Available!*

**4th Street at First Avenue - 726-7703**

**Open at 7:00 a.m. Daily**



**"Yeah, We've Got That!"**

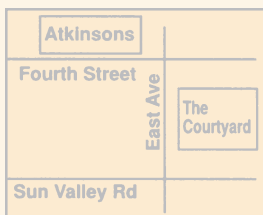


# OSAKA SUSHI

Lunch ♦ Dinner ♦ Take Out  
Outdoor Deck ♦ Catering

Japanese Cuisine  
OVER 200 DELICIOUS ITEMS

Sushi ♦ Sashimi ♦ Tempura ♦ Suki Yaki  
Teriyaki ♦ Udon ♦ Soba ♦ Beer ♦ Sake ♦ Wine

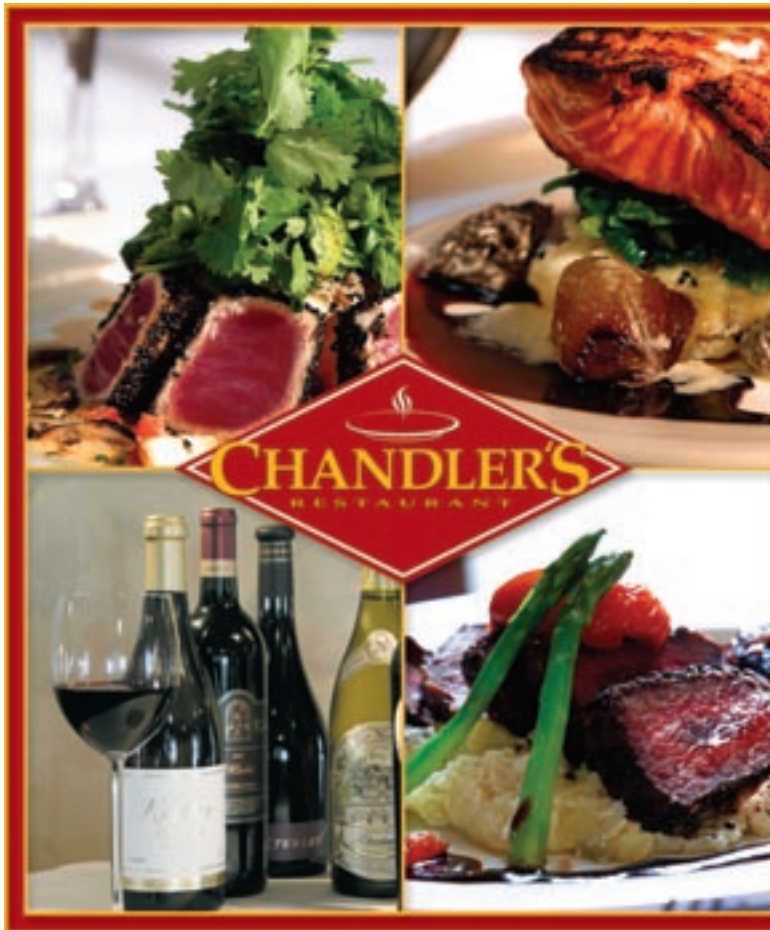


LUNCH: Mon-Fri, 11:30-2:30  
DINNER: Sun-Thu, 5:00-10:00  
Fri & Sat, 5:00-11:00

360 East Avenue N. #5  
In the Courtyard ♦ Ketchum, ID

726-6999 ♦ 726-5593





*The Valley's Home  
of Fine Dining*

Award-Winning  
Wine List.

Wine Spectator Award  
of Excellence.

World-class dining served  
in Ketchum's warm, rustic  
atmosphere for over a decade.

Dinner served nightly  
from 6:00 p.m.

**726.1776**

Trail Creek Village  
200 South Main St. • Ketchum

## KETCHUM GRILL

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN  
CUISINE SERVED IN A CASUAL  
AND RUSTIC ENVIRONMENT.



AS ALWAYS, 7 NIGHTS A WEEK FROM 5:30  
AT THE CORNER OF 5TH AND EAST

208-726-4660



GOURMET ASIAN FOOD

Innovative Asian cuisine featuring black pepper calamari, pad thai,  
and much more, complemented by our well-chosen beer & wine.



**RESERVATIONS APPRECIATED • 726-1301**  
CORNER OF 6TH STREET & WARM SPRINGS ROAD

good  
food  
for all

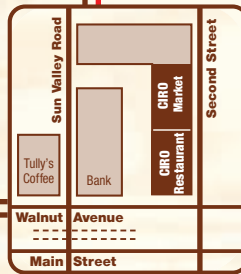


*"A WINE BAR THAT RIVALS ANY IN A BIG CITY!"*  
SUNSET MAGAZINE, OCTOBER 2006

- wood oven cooking • Neapolitan-style pizza •
- grilled meats & fish • vegetarian entrées •
- entrée salads • pasta • soup • panini sandwiches •
- daily specials • organic ingredients •
- family-friendly menu •
- 35 wines by the glass • 90 wines by the bottle •
- Organic & Imported beer •

**OPEN LUNCH & DINNER**  
Mon-Fri: 11:30am-9:30pm  
Sat/Sun: 5:30pm-9:30pm

Call for reservations or carryout ~ 727-1800



market &  
wine merchants



don't  
cook  
tonight

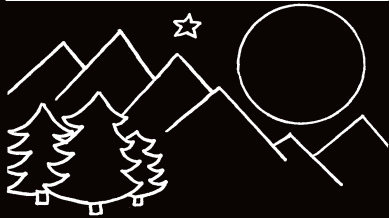
- **meals-to-go** •
- ~prepared daily in-house~
- ~entrees, side dishes & hors d'oeuvres~
- ~salads, sandwiches & soups~
- **cheese & deli** •
- ~artisan & imported cheese - cured & cooked meats~
- **desserts** •
- ~individual & specialty sweets - cookies & bars~
- ~celebration cakes~
- **wine** •
- ~best selection of Italy~
- Northwest & California ~
- ~organic & imported beer~
- **etc....** •
- ~tableware, serving & cook ware~
- **Mon-Sat: 10am-7pm • 622.4400 •**

**230 Walnut Avenue**

*Walnut Avenue Mall ~ corner of Walnut Avenue & E. Second Street  
1 block south of Tully's Coffee & Sun Valley Road*

**Ketchum, Idaho**

The full moon



**STEAKHOUSE & CATERING**



*Join us in our cozy dining room & enjoy the finest food & great wines at the best value in the Valley.*

**OPEN TUE-SAT AT 5:30  
WED: ALL YOU CAN EAT BBQ RIBS**

*Reservations Appreciated—Chef/Owners present every day.*

**118 S. MAIN ST., BELLEVUE 788-5912**

*Voted "Valley's Best Chef" and "Valley's Best Caterer"!*

Check out our website for Daily Specials and for additional information  
[www.fullmoonempire.com](http://www.fullmoonempire.com)



*Traditional French cuisine in a European atmosphere  
Bar menu available in the full-service Olympic Bar.*



*Sun Valley Rd & Walnut Ave in Ketchum*

**726-3388**



# restaurants

- 1 AKASHA ORGANICS
- 2 BACI ITALIAN CAFE
- 3 CHANDLER'S
- 4 CIRO RESTAURANT & MARKET
- 5 CK'S
- 6 CRISTINA'S RESTAURANT
- 7 DAVINCI'S
- 8 DESPERADO'S
- 9 FELIX'S RESTAURANT
- 10 THE FULL MOON
- 11 GLOBUS
- 12 KETCHUM GRILL
- 13 LEFTY'S BAR & GRILL
- 14 MICHEL'S CHRISTIANIA
- 15 OSAKA SUSHI
- 16 PERRY'S
- 17 PIONEER SALOON
- 18 THE ROOSEVELT
- 19 ROSINA'S
- 20 THE SAWTOOTH CLUB
- 21 SHANGHAI PALACE
- 22 SMOKY MOUNTAIN PIZZA
- 23 SUSHI ON SECOND



Simple...good...organic...civilized food. Comfortable without being pretentious. From her signature soups to her fresh baked breads, and breakfast items like the cornetti pastry—a cream filled cross between brioche and croissants—everything that **Cristina's** makes in this European-style trattoria is steeped in tradition. "Food is really about people and friendship," **Cristina** says. "My menu is developed around simplicity, a clear kind of flavor, seasonal ingredients and love and care." 726-4499.



Voted the valley's best restaurant for sushi and seafood. Come and experience why Bon Appetit magazine wrote, "Sushi on Second ... the best sushi I've had in years!" Our seafood is supplied fresh daily by Idaho Seafood. Enjoy our nightly specials, dinners, steaks, tempura, salads, noodles, appetizers, teriyaki, premium sake, beer & wine. 20-seat sushi bar, 2 private tatami rooms plus much more! Second and Main, Ketchum. 726-5181.



Perfect gathering place for lunch, après ski & dinner. "...a **wine bar that rivals any in a big city!**" **SUNSET 10/06**. Casual, sophisticated modern-alpine design. Open kitchen, cozy fireplace & wine bar—great Baldy views! Wood oven; simple, seasonal food; natural products; daily specials. Neapolitan pizza; meat, seafood, vegetarian, pasta entrees; Salad, soup, paninis. Eclectic wines: 35 by glass—90 by bottle; beer. **Lunch & Dinner Mon-Sat: 11:30am-10pm / Dinner: Sun: 5:30-10pm. For reservation/carry-out: 727-1800.**



The Roosevelt Tavern & Grille is downtown Ketchum at its very best. Apres Ski begins with drinks & appetizers around the fireplace at 4 PM. Dinner offerings include grilled free-range meats & poultry, fresh seafood, healthy pastas, Tuscan pizzas, signature salads and much more. Our full bar is complemented by an extensive wine list and a wide selection of northwest micro-brews. Banquet & private party facilities are available. Reservations accepted. 726-0051.



Voted by locals for four consecutive years as the "Valley's Best Overall Restaurant" & "Valley's Best Bar." Sizzling steaks, chops & ribs, fresh mesquite-grilled seafood, free range chicken & duck, creative pastas, rack of lamb, healthy salads and more. Featuring one of the best wine lists in Sun Valley. Cocktails & lighter fare served around the cozy fireplace in our classic western bar. Reservations accepted. 726-5233.



Discover an authentic taste of Japan on Ketchum's East Avenue. The valley's only Japanese owned and operated sushi restaurant, Osaka boasts the best and most affordable sushi in town. Be sure to try their great lunch specials and wide selection of beer, wine and sake. The restaurant also offers an assortment of teriyaki dishes. Open seven days a week (lunch Mon-Fri only). Take out and catering available. 726-6999.



Globus fuses the finest cuisine from the Pacific Rim and beyond, incorporating ancient culinary traditions. Local favorites include vegetarian dumplings, pad thai, black pepper calamari, rama shrimp, green thai curry and pan-fried crispy fish. The menu changes frequently, assuring the guests the freshest ingredients and providing a strong reason to return. A well chosen beer and wine list and outgoing staff help complete the experience. Reservations appreciated. Corner of 6th Street and Warm Springs Road. 726-1301.



Located in an historic home on the corner of East Avenue and Fifth Street in Ketchum next to the Ore Wagon Museum. Specializing in contemporary American cuisine in a casual and rustic environment. Creative appetizers, small pizzas, pastas and fruit-wood grilled meats and fish. Award-winning wine list and micro beers. Reasonably priced. Dinner served from 5:30 p.m. nightly. Reservations accepted. 726-4660. Reserve online at [www.ketchumgrill.com](http://www.ketchumgrill.com).



KETCHUM - SUN VALLEY, IDAHO

EST. 1994

726-5181 ♦ Second & Main, Ketchum  
RESERVATIONS APPRECIATED

KNOWN FOR THE VALLEY'S BEST SUSHI & SEAFOOD.  
ALSO FEATURING STEAKS, TERIYAKI, NOODLES, KOBE BEEF,  
TEMPURA, AND NIGHTLY MULTINATIONAL SPECIALS.



# ROSINA'S

(Formerly Salvatore's)

Real Italian food  
prepared by an Italian

Specializing In Seafood, Veal,  
Chicken, Fine Home-made Pastas &  
Large Variety of Low-Carb Items

Open 7 Days a Week  
6pm to Closing SUMMER • 5pm to Closing WINTER

PLEASE CALL OR COME IN!  
*Air-Conditioned Dining Room*

## 726.4444

Upstairs 511 Building  
511 Leadville Ave. • Behind Silver Creek Outfitters

## EAST BISTRO

avenue

Mediterranean-inspired cuisine,  
creative nightly specials.

220 EAST AVENUE  
KETCHUM • 726-9251

NEXT TO THE ELEPHANT'S PERCH • RESERVATIONS ACCEPTED

VOTED "VALLEY'S BEST CHEF" IN 2004

# 上海宮



## Shanghai Palace

Authentic Chinese Restaurant

Lunch Buffet Daily

531 N. Main Street Ketchum, ID  
208-726-2688


**Van Gordon Sauter**  
from page 71

achieve the broadcast they want to carry into the future. I think she will be successful...if they create a highly personalized Couric broadcast, and not a generic television news broadcast with Katie Couric."

■ **Journalism's future:** "Increasingly people get news from a wider range of sources. Internet is for the better. Internet will break it (news and information) down and break it down, not to community groups but to interest groups."

■ **TV fantasy:** "If I had billions of dollars for television, I would use it to reach the unemployed and uneducated young men in the major centers of Islamic concentration (with) a video version of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty for a potentially critical force that, left to its own, will develop a narrow, pre-medieval vision of the world. And a vision that can collapse into a highly dangerous mindset."

■ **His TV record:** "I did what I wanted to do and when I wanted to do it. I did more things right than wrong. I probably helped more people than I harmed."

■ **The valley's future:** "The Wood River Valley, as it is revered and remembered and celebrated, is gone. The valley is being paved and built and bermed over. Density will increase. Buildings will grow taller and more unsightly. Houses will further mutate to sizes that would mortify the Hapsburgs. Unsold condos will proliferate. Traffic will garrote the highway and business districts. City fathers prattle on about affordable housing but in reality it won't happen on a scale that comes close to approaching need. The answer for public and private sector employees will be subsidized housing. Like it or not, Ketchum and Sun Valley have joined the arriviste universe of Aspen and Jackson. Hailey, which has more in common with Burley than Ketchum, will hold out for a while. But Hailey and Bellevue are the Ketchums of tomorrow. I am always stunned by homeowners, some of whom have been here for only several years, who say if they were looking for a place to settle, it wouldn't be in this valley." 

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## Chilali Lodge at Sun Valley 25 luxury condos

Extraordinary residences in the heart of downtown Ketchum facing Bald Mountain. Each unit offers a living room with a stone fireplace, vaulted windows that open to the mountains, spacious master suites, and marble/tiled bathrooms with jetted tubs. Roof top hot tub, fitness center, underground parking, large storage areas and more. Single story and townhouse style units available. View Floor plans at [www.chilalilodge.com](http://www.chilalilodge.com). Ground floor units starting at \$1,495,000.

**Dan Gorham**  
Windermere Real Estate  
(208) 622-2700



## Exclusive estate home on a pond in an elite neighborhood

Privacy, serenity and views are yours from this estate home located in Flying Heart Ranch. This 4 bedroom, 4 1/2 bath home, which is 4720 square feet, features a gourmet kitchen, the master suite on the main level, and a mysterious and very unique underground wine cellar. The backyard adjoins the largest pond in Flying Heart Ranch, where you can launch your canoe or kayak, and enjoy the evening sunset. Please call Marlow for a private showing. \$3,695,000.

**Marlow Geuin, ABR, Broker**  
Classic Realty  
(208) 726-9161

What's a Flying Squirrel got to do with it?  
from page 64

# Frenchman's Ridge

The old Frenchman's Mine was located just downhill from where the lower terminal of the Frenchman's chairlift now stands. The shaft was filled in when the lift was built in 1995. Several of the runs in the area—Au Jus, Can Can and French Dip—follow the French theme.

**Graduate**  It comes after College.

**Janss Pass**  Named for Bill Janss, head of the Janss Corporation, which owned Sun Valley from 1964 to 1977.

## The Bowls

**Mayday Bowl**  Instructor Florian Haemmerle, who taught skiing at Sun Valley from its opening in 1936 until the mid 1960s, organized a slalom race on the bowl on May 4, 1938—St. Florian's Day. Haemmerle's widow, Bebe Haemmerle, said the race was for instructors who had decided not to return to Austria for the summer, and was won by her husband. "He stuck his pole in the snow and said, 'I proclaim that this is Mayday!'" she said.


**Christmas Bowl**  After Haemmerle christened Mayday Bowl, other instructors followed the holiday theme in naming the two nearby bowls.  
*and*

**Easter Bowl**

**Lookout Bowl**  Named for the U.S. Forest Service fire lookout built on the top of Bald Mountain in 1941. The building is still there but is now used only as a radio repeater station.

**Lefty Bowl**  Originally, this was the farthest bowl to the left (looking up from the bottom) that could be skied without getting into thick trees. Trees near the bottom of the bowls farther to the left have since been cleared.

**Farout Bowl**  Well, it's pretty far out.

**Sigi's Bowl**  Named after former Sun Valley Ski School Director Sigi Engl. Originally from Austria, Engl served as ski school director from 1952 to 1975. 



## SAWTOOTH TACK & FEED

- Quality English & Western Tack
- Equine, Poultry, Goat, Dog & Cat Feeds
- Clothing & Footwear



photo: Photo by Field  
horse: Cavalarra  
rider: Kim Koch

710 N. Main St.  
Bellevue, ID  
83313

208.788.8225  
866.322.8225

*Supporting Champions at all levels!*

What if  
you could change  
your life  
in 30 minutes?



**At Curves we offer  
30-minute fitness,  
commonsense weight loss,  
and the support you need  
to take control of your life.**

**In Hailey**  
811 First Avenue North

**788-6066**

**Curves**

Join Now  
**50% Off**  
Service Fee

# calendar

## DECEMBER

### Children's Christmas and Holiday Party

In the Children's Library at the Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum. Time TBA. Details: 726-3493.

**Mom's Night Out**—Bring your mother and grandmothers to Boulder Mountain Clayworks to enjoy a glass of wine and create a holiday platter. 6 to 8 p.m., Dec. 6. Details: 726-4484.

**Ketchum Christmas Tree Lighting & Caroling Party**—Santa will attend, while the Children's Choir sings carols. Hot cocoa and cookies. 5:30 p.m., Dec. 7, Forest Service Park, Ketchum. Details: 726-8118.

**Brown Bag Talks**—HPV Vaccine 12:15-1:15 p.m., Dec. 7 at St. Luke's in Ketchum. Details: 727-8733 or stlukesonline.org.

**Whose Nature? What's Nature?**—The Sun Valley Center for the Arts winter exhibition continues through Jan. 12. On Dec. 7 photography expert Joel Snyder presents a slide lecture titled *From the Sublime to the Industrial: The Evolution of the Photographic Landscape*, at 7 p.m., The Center, Ketchum. Details: 726-9491 or sunvalleycenter.org.

**Free Lecture**—Local author John Rember gives his final lecture on writing at the Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum 6 p.m., Dec. 7. Details: 726-3493.

**ERC Book Club**—Discussion on *Traplins* by John Rember at the ERC from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Dec. 7. Details: 726-4333.

**The Nutcracker**—The Sun Valley Ballet School presents the Christmas classic 7 p.m., Dec. 8; 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Dec. 9 and 3 p.m., Dec. 10, at the nexStage Theatre in Ketchum.

**Boulder Mountain Clayworks Holiday Sale**—9 a.m.-3 p.m., Dec. 9. Details: 726-4484.

**Boulder Clinic**—Ski sections of the Boulder Mountain Tour Course at Galena Lodge with Barb Hatlevik, Dec. 10. Details: 726-4010.

**A Madrigal Dinner**—The Wood River High School Players and Choir will perform in the Wood River High School Commons at 6 p.m., Dec. 13. Details: 578-5020 ext.2228.

**Bus Stop**—Company of Fools presents a classic comedy by William Inge directed by John Glenn. Dec. 13-31, The Liberty Theatre, Hailey. Details: 788-6520.

**Free Lecture**—Diana Fassino reads from

her new book, *When the Cat Had My Tongue: A Very English Memoir*, Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum, 6 p.m., Dec. 14. Details: 726-3493.

**Ski Free Day**—Ski the North Valley Trails with a free day pass. Free classic ski clinic 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Dec. 16 at SNRA, seven miles north of Ketchum. Details: 726-4950. Free classic ski rentals at Elephant's Perch. Details: 726-3497.

**2006 Promise, Noel, Jesus Is Born!**—Celebrate the 20th year of the Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood musical Christmas tradition, Dec. 16-17. Details: 720-2891.

**Ski Free**—Learn to ski clinic at Galena Lodge. Skating Clinic at 1 p.m. and Classic Clinic at 2:30 p.m., Dec. 17. Reservations: 726-4010.

**A Christmas Carol**—The Laughing Stock Theatre presents a musical adaptation of Dickens' Christmas classic at the nexStage Theatre. Dec. 20-24. Details: 726-9124 and tickets 726-4TKS.

**Holiday Dinners**—Enjoy the holidays at Galena Lodge with a four-course dinner at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 23-26 and Dec. 29-31. Reservations: 726-4010.

**Christmas Eve in Sun Valley**—Sun Valley Resort celebrates Christmas Eve with an ice skating exhibition, torchlight skiing parade, visit from Santa and fireworks, Dec. 24. Details: 622-2097.

**Winter Holidays Antique Show**—nexStage Theatre, Dec. 28-30. Details: 720-5547.

## JANUARY

**Vermicomposting**—ERC introductory workshop for adults and families at the ERC, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Jan. 2. Free to members. Details: 726-4333.

**ERC Book Club**—Discussion on *A River Runs Through It: Reviving Wild Places* edited by Thomas Reed Petersen at the ERC from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Jan. 4. Details: 726-4333.

**Sun Valley Telemark Series**—All terrain telemark event. First of 2007 Sun Valley Telemark Series. Jan. 7. Details: sunvalleytele.org.

**Subversive Moves**—Sun Valley Center for the Arts winter show runs Jan. 12 through March 9. This contemporary art exhibition was curated by Jeanne Meyers. Included are a series of lectures demystifying contemporary art. 726-9491 or sunvalleycenter.org.



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**Ski Free**—Learn to ski clinic at Galena Lodge with a Skating Clinic at 1 p.m. and a Classic Clinic at 2:30 p.m., Jan. 13. Reservations: 726-4010.

**The Ski Tour**—Debuts in Sun Valley Jan. 11-14, featuring competitive events with skiercross at Dollar Mountain and halfpipe competitions at Warm Springs with \$500,000 in prize money. Concerts, film festival and parties plus events for children and the family. Details: theskitour.com.

**Ski Free Day**—Ski free at Quigley Nordic. Free intro to skate ski clinic 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Jan. 13. Details: 788-2117 or bcd.org. Free demos and pre-registration with Sturtevants. Details: 788-7847.

**Boulder Clinic**—Ski sections of the Boulder Mountain Tour Course at Galena Lodge. Jan. 14. Details: 726-4010.

**Telluride Mountain Film on Tour**—The ERC presents the tradition of mountaineering and adventuring through documentaries by cutting-edge filmmakers. Jan. 18 in Hailey, Jan. 19-20 in Ketchum. Details: 726-4333.

**NWEI Discussion Course**—10-week ERC course on our choices that impact the earth meets at Tully's, Ketchum from 7-8 p.m., Jan. 23-March 31 and Zaney's, Hailey, from 10-11 a.m., Jan. 27-March 31. Details: 726-4333.

**Ski the Rails**—A cross-country ski tour along the Wood River Trails from Ketchum to Hailey on the old Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Lunch will be served at the Sun Valley Brewery, Hailey 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Jan. 27. Details: 788-2117 or bcd.org.

**Boulder Clinic**—Ski sections of the Boulder Mountain Tour course at Galena Lodge. Jan. 28. Details: 726-4010.

**ERC Nature Photography Workshop & Hike**—Photographer Craig Wolfrom will lead a snowshoe/cross-country ski hike teaching camera basics. Meet at the ERC, 9 a.m., Jan. 28. \$25. Details: 726-4333.

## FEBRUARY

**ERC Book Club**—Discussion on *The Big Oyster: History on the Half Shell* by Mark Kurlansky at the ERC from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Feb. 1. Details: 726-4333.

**Sawtooth National Forest Avalanche Center Benefit**—Join Friends of the Sawtooth Avalanche Center for the Best of Banff Film Festival World Tour and Super Raftle at the nexStage Theater. Doors open at 6 p.m. Feb. 1-3. Details: 622-0095.

**Wells Fargo Boulder Mountain Tour**—The 32nd Boulder Mountain Tour, one of the largest cross-country races in the U.S., starts at Galena Lodge and winds south for 32km to SNRA headquarters, Feb. 3. Details: 726-3497 or bouldermountaintour.com.

**Sun Valley Telemark Series**—The Bob Marley Day Race at Soldier Mountain is the 2nd event in the 2007 Sun Valley Telemark Series. Feb. 4. Details: sunvalleytele.org.

**ERC Snow Cave Workshop**—Learn to build a snow cave from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Feb. 4. Free to members. Details: 726-4333.

**Galena Lodge Cross Country Ski Festival**—Enjoy a day of cross country skiing demonstrations, clinics and festivities at Galena Lodge from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Feb. 4. Details: 726-4010.

**Valentine's Day Card Making**—At the Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum. Date TBA. Details: 726-3493.

**Valentine's Day Dinner**—Bring a date or friends for dinner at Galena Lodge at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 14. Reservations: 726-4010.

**Quilt Art**—Nationally recognized and award-winning quilt artist Leslie Rego talks at the Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum. Date and time TBA. Details: 726-3493.

**K2**—Company of Fools presents Patrick Meyers' play directed by John Glenn. Feb. 14-March 4 at the Liberty Theatre, Hailey. Tickets: 788-6520 or companyoffools.org.

**Sun Valley Opera Diva Party**—Diva ticket holders party "Around the Piano" with the artists at 6 p.m. No host dinner at Chandler's with the artists follows at 8 p.m., Feb. 16. Reservations: 726-0991.

**Sun Valley Opera**—Presents Gilbert and Sullivan directly from New York City: Act I *The Mikado* and Act II *Gilbert and Sullivan Hits*, at the Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Warm Springs Rd., Ketchum. 8 p.m., Feb. 17 and 4 p.m., Feb. 18. Details: 720-0991, Chapter One or sunvalleyopera.com.

**The Winter One Acts**—The Wood River High School Players direct and produce one act plays at The Community Campus Theater in Hailey, 7:30 p.m., Feb. 22-24. Details: 578-5020 ext.2228.

**Cantus**—Men's vocal ensemble, part of the Winter Music Series presented by The Sun Valley Center for the Arts, at the Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, 7:30 p.m., Feb 23. Details: 726-9491 or sunvalleycenter.org.

**1st Annual Galena Lodge Snowshoe Race**—Open to all ages and abilities with a special race for kids at Galena Lodge Feb. 24. Details: 726-4010.

## MARCH

**ERC Book Club**—Discussion on *The Weather Makers: How Man is Changing the Planet and What it Means For Life on Earth* by Tim Flannery at the ERC from 7:30 to 9 p.m. March 1. Details: 726-4333.

**Sun Valley Summer Symphony Education Series**—Join Music Director, Alasdair Neale at 6:30 p.m. March 1-2 at the Sun Valley Inn for a presentation and discussion of works for the 2007 season. Details: 622-5607 or svsummersymphony.org.

**Turtle Island String Quartet**—Part of the Winter Music Series, presented by The Sun Valley Center for the Arts, at the Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, 7:30 p.m. March 3. Details: 726-9491 or sunvalleycenter.org.

**Chinese New Year Gala Dinner**—Benefit for the Council Circle Foundation. March 3. Details: 788-3463.

**Sun Valley Telemark Series**—At Dollar

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Mountain. 3rd event in the 2007 series. March 4. Details: [sunvalleytele.org](http://sunvalleytele.org).

**Annie**—St. Thomas Playhouse's *Annie*, 6:30 p.m., March 8-11, with 1 p.m. matinees Saturday and Sunday at the nextStage Theatre in Ketchum. Details: 726-5349 ext. 13.

**Our Moveable Feast**—The Community Library's annual spring gala fund raiser at the Community Library, 415 Spruce St., Ketchum. March 11. Details: 726-3493.

**Bill Janss Memorial Pro Am Classic**—Since 1998, legends of the slopes, both past and present compete with each other and regular Joes in memory of Bill Janss and to benefit the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation. March 15-17. Details: 726-4129.

**Stage Door**—The Community School Players present Kaufman and Ferber's play. March 15-18. Details: 622-3960.

**Spring Loppet**—Wear a costume, bring friends and enjoy skiing the perimeter of Galena Lodge's Nordic Trails, 9 a.m., March 25. Details: 726-4010.

**The Holding Cup**—Alumni skiers race to win prize money for their alma maters. March 30-31. Details: 726-4129.

## APRIL

**Sun Valley Telemark Series**—The Hawaiian Nationals race at Bald Mountain is the final event of the 2007 series. April 7. Details: [sunvalleytele.org](http://sunvalleytele.org).

**Ride, Stride and Glide Race**—Winter triathlon of biking, running and skiing on Galena Lodge's nordic trails with festivities to follow for the closing day of the lodge. April 8. Details: 726-4010.

**Doubt**—Company of Fools presents John Patrick Shanley's play, directed by Denise Simone from April 11-April 29 at the Liberty Theatre, Hailey. Details: 788-6520 or [companyoffools.org](http://companyoffools.org).

## ONGOING

**Business After Hours**—Sponsored by SVKCVB, this monthly community business gathering is open to all. 5-7 p.m. **Dec. 14** at Barry Peterson Jewelers. **Jan. 11** at The Wood River Journal. **Jan. 25** at Idaho Independent Bank. **Feb. 8** at U.S. Bank. **Feb. 22** at Sun Valley Center for the Arts. **March 8** at Bank of the West. **March 21** at Worth Repeating. **April 12** at Sun Valley Rug & Tile. **April 27** at First Bank of Idaho. **May 20** at The Community Library. **May 24** at Distinctive Properties.

**Sun Valley Suns Ice Hockey**—Games take place at the Sun Valley Indoor Ice Arena. Start at 7 p.m. Tickets available at door. Details: 788-5377 or [sunvalleysuns.com](http://sunvalleysuns.com). **Dec. 15-16, Dec. 27, Dec. 29-30, Jan. 5-6, Jan. 19-20, Jan. 26-27, Feb. 9-10, Feb. 16-18, Feb. 23-24** and March 9-10.

**Sun Valley Gallery Association Gallery Walks**—Stroll through town as galleries open, host artists and serve wine from 6-9 p.m. **Dec. 28, Feb. 16, March 9** and **May 25**. See Page 76 for locations. Details: 726-4950.



**Dark Sky Dinners**—View the nighttime sky at Galena Lodge with a four-course dinner at 6:30 p.m., **Dec. 19-20, Jan. 19-20, Feb. 16-18** and **March 18-19**. Reservations: 726-4010.

**Full Moon Dinners**—Enjoy a four-course dinner under the full moon at Galena Lodge at 6:30 p.m. **Dec. 2-5, Jan. 3-6, Feb. 1-4, March 1-4, March 30-April 2**. Reservations: 726-4010.

**Avalanche Basics**—Learn avalanche skills with the Sawtooth National Forest Avalanche Center. 6-9 p.m., **Dec. 5** at the Hemingway Elementary School, Ketchum and **Jan. 4** at the Community Campus, Hailey. Details: 622-0095 or sawtoothavalanche.com. Avalanche Report: 622-8027.

**Avalanche Transceiver Clinics**—Learn avalanche skills with the Sawtooth National Forest Avalanche Center. Classes are held 3 p.m., **Dec. 7, 14, 21, Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8 and Feb. 15** at the Avalanche Rescue Training Park, Sun Valley Rd and on **Jan. 30** from 7-8 p.m. at the Community Campus Room 301 in Hailey. Details: 726-8818 or sawtoothavalanche.com. Avalanche Report: 622-8027.

**Wednesday Workouts**—Intermediate to advanced skiers can improve their skills at Galena Lodge with Barb Hatlevik, 3:30-5:30 p.m., every Wednesday **Dec. 6-March 7**. Reservations: 726-4010.

**ERC Night Sky Viewing Party**—Meet at dusk in front of Atkinsons, Ketchum with local astronomer Mark Nelson, **Dec. 14, Jan. 24 & March 21**. Details: 726-4333.

**Winter Animal Tracking Workshop**—An ERC workshop from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., **Dec. 30, Jan. 6, Jan. 13, Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Feb. 10, Feb. 17**. Free to members. Details: 726-4333.

**Winter Wildlife Snowshoeing**—Free snowshoe walks at Galena Lodge. Every Wednesday starting **Jan. 3-March 28**. Reservations: 726-4010.

**Snowshoe with a Ranger**—Free walks from Galena Lodge. Every Thursday starting **Jan. 11-March 29**. Reservations: 726-4010.

**ERC Birding on Snowshoes**—View birds in the Silver Creek Area. **Jan. 27, Feb. 24 and March 31** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Meet at the Hailey Park and Ride. \$10 non-members and \$15 for families. Details: 726-4333.

**ERC Day Sky Viewing Party**—View the sun through a special telescope. Meet at Giacobbi Square, Ketchum from 3-4 p.m. **Jan. 9, Feb. 8 & March 8**. Details: 726-4333.

**ERC Coming of Spring Walks**—Watch the flora and fauna of spring unfold in the Silver Creek Area. **March 3, 10, 17 & 24** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Meet at the Hailey Park and Ride. \$10 non-members and \$15 for families. Details: 726-4333.

## Calendar Submissions

All submissions for the Summer 2007 calendar should be sent to editor@sunvalleyguide.com. Deadline: April 13

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# Meet Houdini, Ketchum's most famous python

A meal of cotton and cords turned a local snake into an international celebrity. Words by Terry Smith. Photo By David N. Seelig.



**Houdini coils himself** around his owner, Karl Beznoska. Healthy and happy now, Houdini has fully recovered from his brush with death by electric blanket.

Several months after becoming international celebrities, life is returning to normal for Karl Beznoska and his pet snake, Houdini. Yet normal is a relative term for a man who shares his home with a 12-foot Burmese python.

“Only about 10 people a day ask me about Houdini. It used to be about 30,” said Beznoska. Houdini is the snake who, following an unintentional meal of a queen-sized electric blanket—with the cord and control box making for a not-so-tasty dessert—achieved a global 15 minutes of fame last summer. Surgery, conducted by veterinarians Karsten Fostvedt and Barry Rathfon at Ketchum’s St. Francis Pet Clinic, saved Houdini’s life, happily concluding the potentially tragic incident.

But the story didn’t end there. The Associated Press picked up the local *Idaho Mountain Express*’ report on the incident, and within 24 hours thousands of newspapers, television broadcasts, radio programs and Internet services were telling the world about Houdini’s mis-

“He knows me really well, but you always approach him cautiously.”

adventure. Good Morning America, the BBC, CNN and virtually every major news agency in the world carried the story.

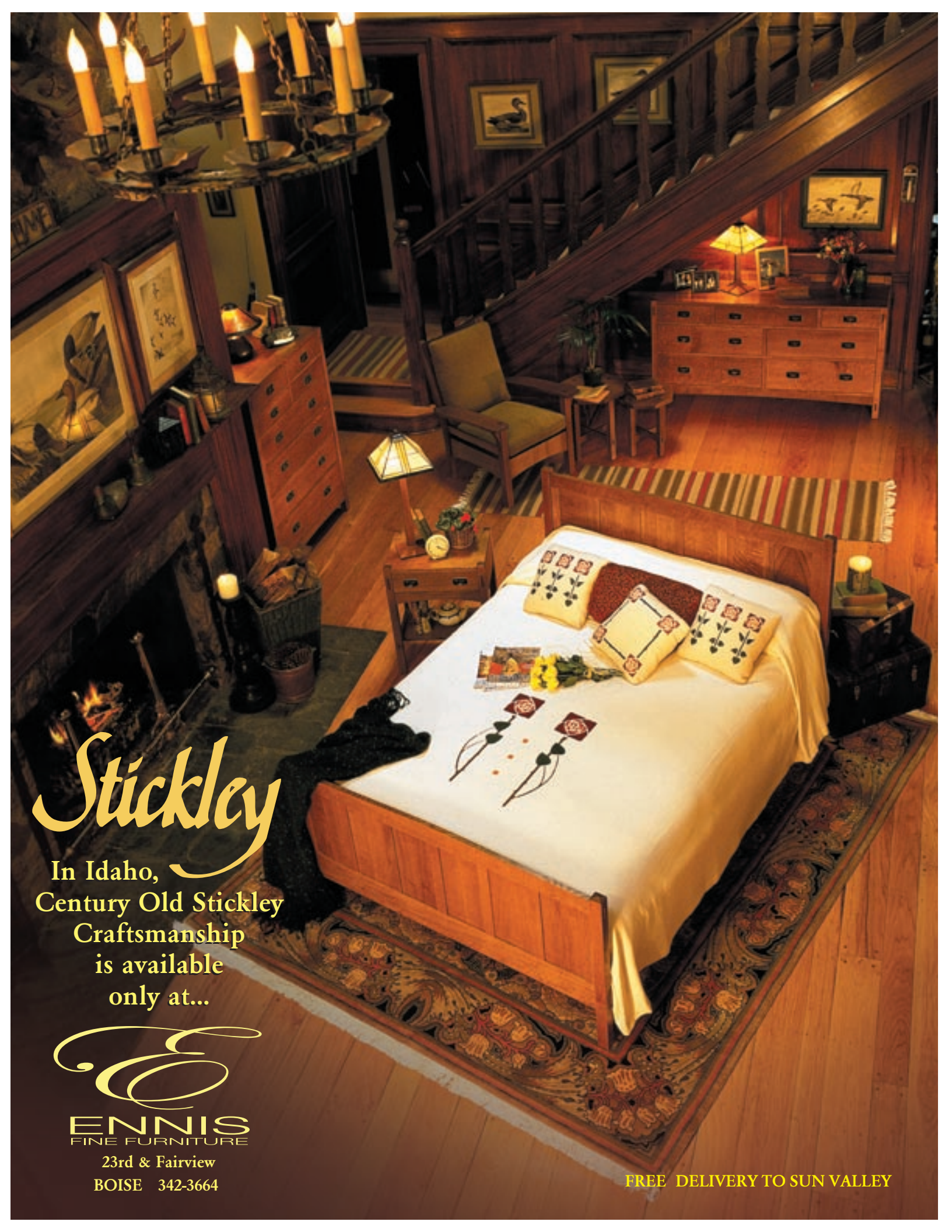
Beznoska enjoyed his moment in the limelight, but he’s unchanged by it.

He’s still the same congenial, outgoing guy he was when, on a fateful day last July, he drove to the *Idaho Mountain Express* offices with a literally stuffed Houdini in the back of his pickup.

Beznoska, 70, is a native of Austria. The former ski instructor spends his time hiking and traveling frequently, and always has a good story on hand regarding his Amazon and other jungle excursions. Hanging out at Beznoska’s place, a beautiful home he built himself that is surrounded by a finely manicured yard, which borders thick brush and trees, can be like an episode of *Wild Kingdom*. When a large garter snake slithered in front of us, Beznoska calmly picked it up and held it for a few moments before letting it go. “If you handle them loosely, they’ll simmer down after awhile.”

Though Houdini is a pet, Beznoska is ever mindful that he is still a wild animal. “He knows me really well, but you always approach him cautiously,” he said. “They’re not like your average cat or dog. I know his behaviors fairly well, so I know when not to pick him up.”

Beznoska is an experienced snake handler. He’s owned boa constrictors and, before Houdini, he had a reticulated python. But Houdini is his favorite. Their friendship began 16 years ago when Houdini was three years old and about five feet long. The bond between the two is obvious, when Beznoska occasionally grabs Houdini’s forked tongue, the huge python doesn’t seem to mind. **SN**



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