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February 2008

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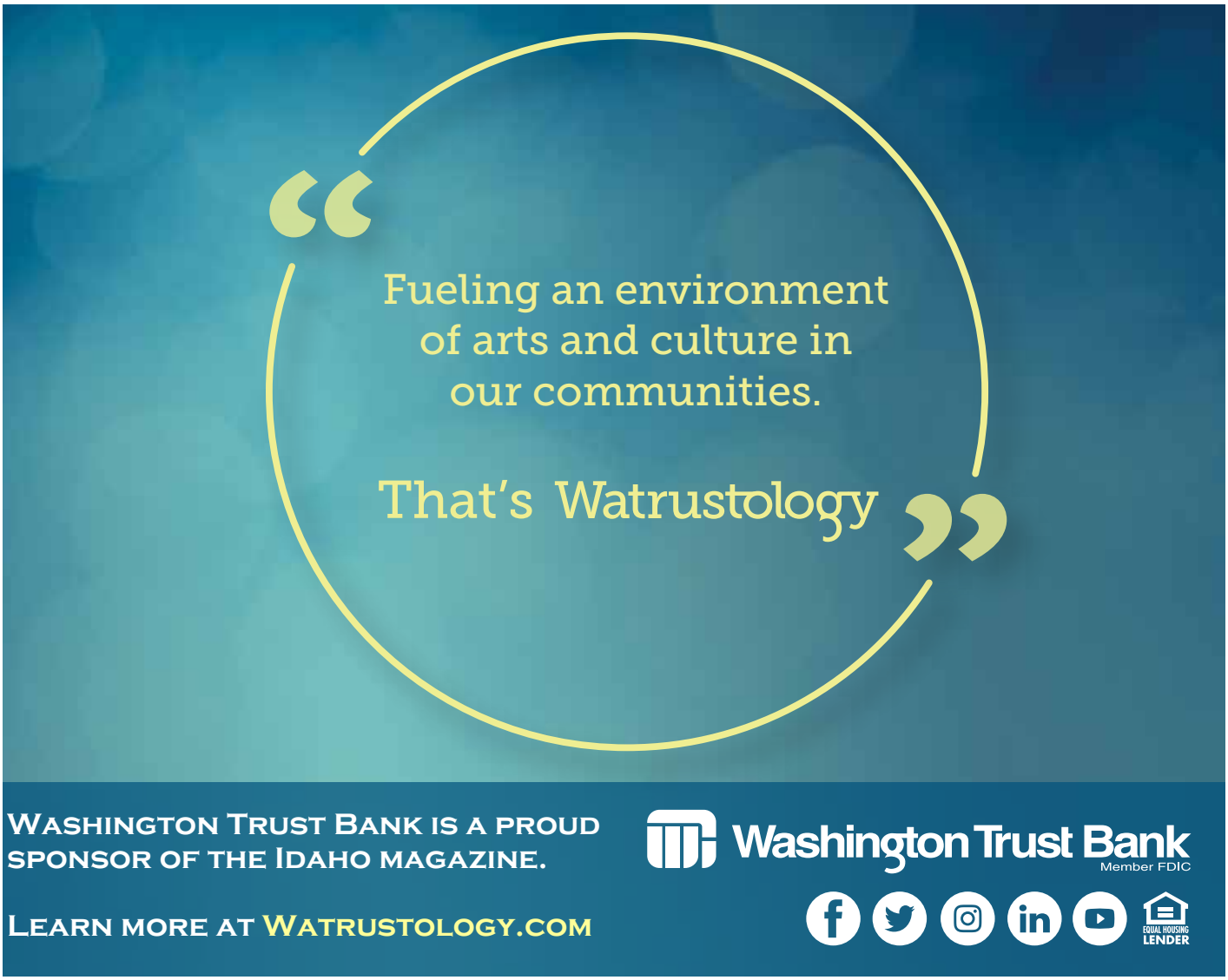

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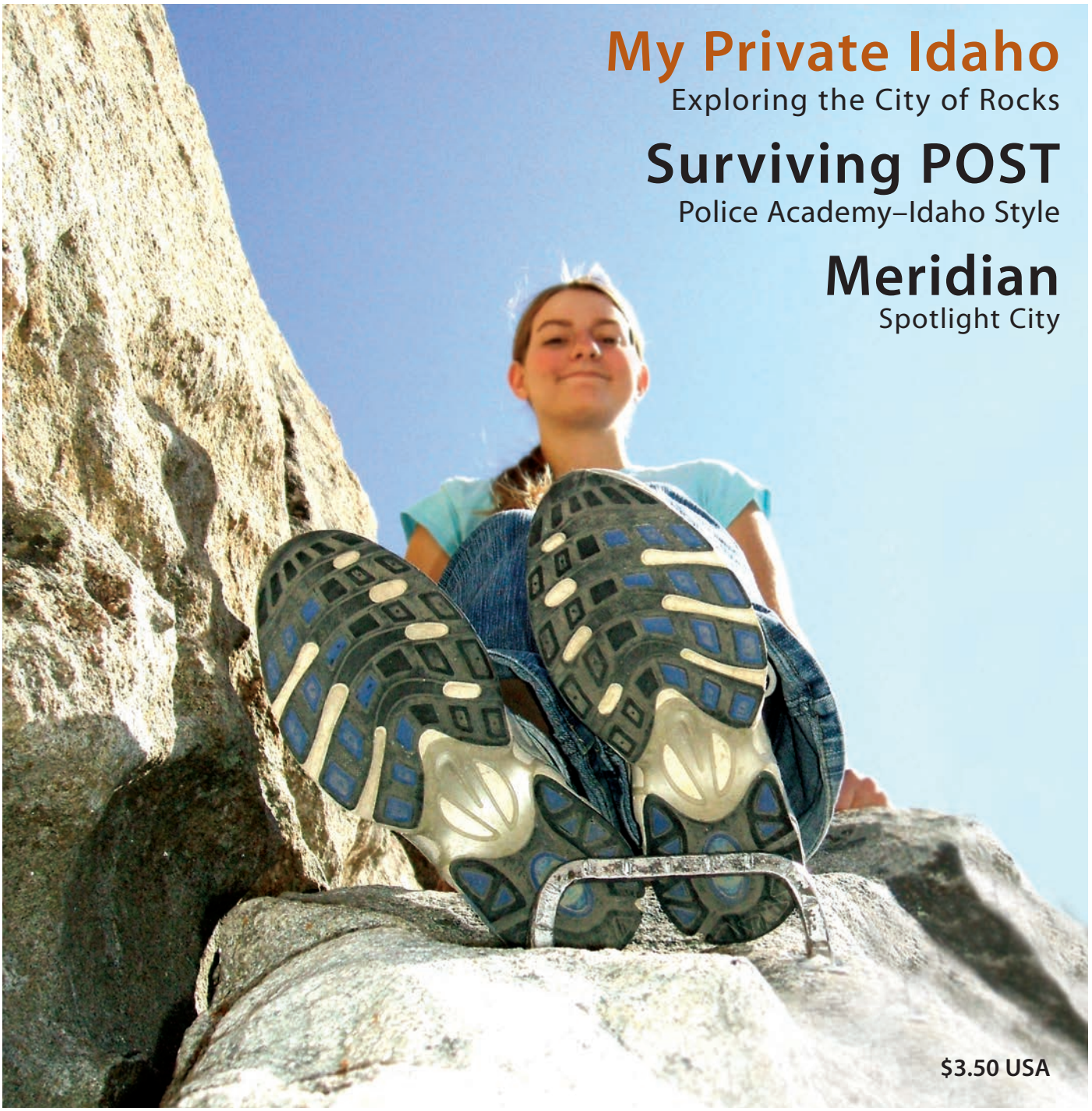

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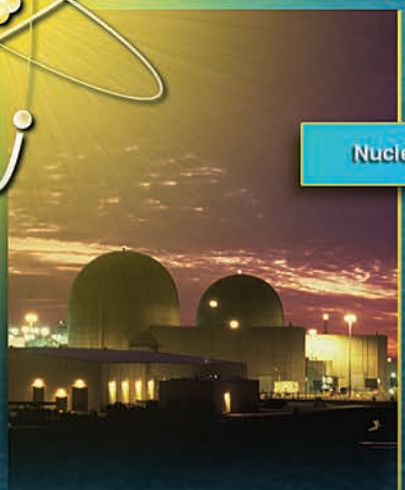

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IDAHO magazine

F E A T U R E S

12 • My Private Idaho

Located near the border between Idaho and Utah, the City of Rocks is prized for its mammoth granite formations and beautiful, stark wilderness. Campers, hikers, and, particularly, climbers, think of it as a necessary part of their world, just distant enough from civilization to keep it special and unspoiled.

By Dora Rollins

32 • Meridian
Spotlight City

From its earliest days as an agricultural town through days of stagnation and then amazing growth, Meridian has remained a place with a secure sense of its own identity. For years the fastest growing municipality in the state, it is well on its way to becoming a regional powerhouse, both economically and socially.

By Linda Funaiole

48 • Surviving POST
Police Academy

Individuals looking for careers in law enforcement throughout Idaho will almost certainly attend the POST Academy, where rigorous training is tempered with a strong sense of public responsibility. The author, a graduate of the academy, details the process that turns a civilian into an officer of the law.

By Jana Kemp

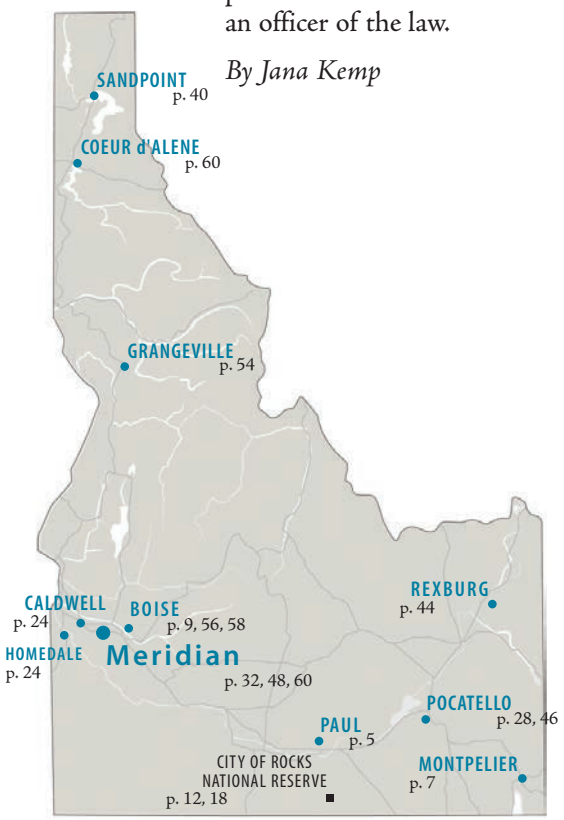
Dear Readers:

February is a month, still solidly in winter, where most of us begin thinking about how we are going to spend the spring and summer. We are past the holidays, past the New Year, and are well on our way to the rest of the year. For us, here at *IDAHO magazine*, we look forward to our best and most interesting year yet.

When many of us consider spring and summer in Idaho, we start thinking about the outdoors, and so it is here. You'll notice a double feature of sorts about one of the gems of our Gem State, the City of Rocks. If you haven't seen it in person, I urge you to go; if you have, I suspect you are disinclined to talk about it much, fearing an influx of new climbers and campers.

I hope you take the time this year to explore our state and enjoy the treasures it holds.

Dene Oneida
Managing Editor



departments

40

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Pictured: Alicia Dayley on the Rocks, City of Rocks National Reserve

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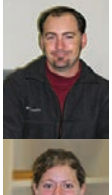
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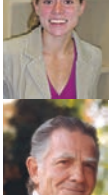
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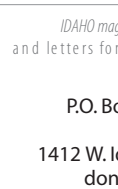
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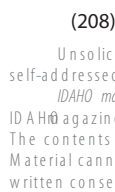
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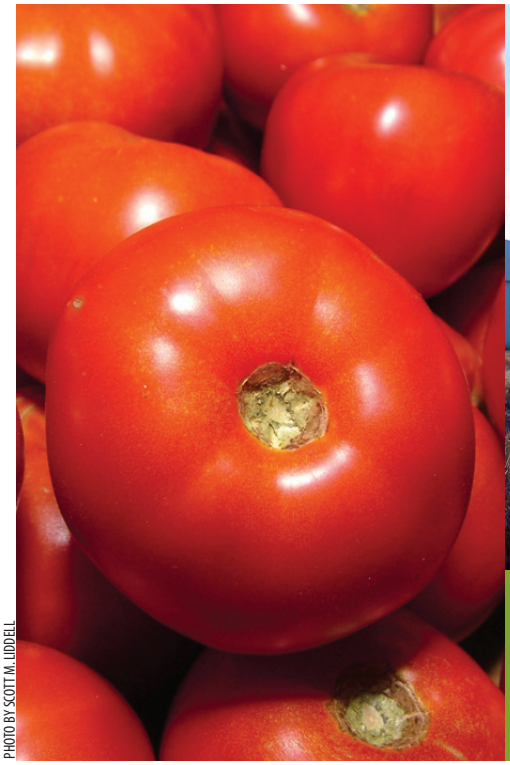

PHOTO BY SCOTT M. LIDDELL

PHOTO BY BETH COFER

LEFT: ***Tomato Harvest—Ripened to scarlet perfection.***

ABOVE: ***Built squatly by the water—Greenhouses take year-around advantage of the hot water produced by sugar beet processing.***

Sugar Factory finds Sweet Solution in Hot Water

By Beth Cofer

There's nothing sweeter than a juicy, vine-ripened tomato grown by the experts of sweet…according to clients of the Amalgamated Sugar Company's greenhouse-grown tomatoes. Gerry Holbrook, Agriculture Maintenance Supervisor of the Mini-Cassia District for Amalgamated oversees their experimental greenhouse located at their factory in Paul. He says feedback on their tomatoes is always positive. "Tomatoes are just better tasting when vine-ripened in a perfect growing environment." Customers include local restaurants, employees of Amalgamated, and friends. Ron Anderson, owner of Alaska's Best in Rupert, has been a customer since the beginning. He says, "The tomatoes I get from Amalgamated are comparable in pricing to others, but far superior in quality and flavor…they actually taste like a tomato…and because they are picked right before they are delivered, they're very cost-effective in that there's very little waste. They're not just decoration, that's what sets them apart. Customers always want to know where I get them after they've eaten one."

About four years ago, Galan Rogers, an Amalgamated engineer, was reading an article in an industry

Fed by capillary tubes—Greenhouse-raised tomatoes thriving in the sunlight .

PHOTO COURTESY THE AMALGAMATED SUGAR COMPANY

magazine that revealed how British Sugar used its condensate "waste" water to heat a greenhouse and then water the plants grown inside. Rogers presented the idea to then Agriculture Manager John Schorr, who has since moved to the Boise office as corporate director of agriculture. He remembers thinking, "We have the water and heat to create a perfect growing condition year-round. As a company we are always looking for good uses for our co-products." So they gave it a try. The idea took root, and, today, plans are being made for a twenty-acre system with hopes to market and supply tomatoes and cucumbers to West Coast consumers in the near future.

HOW IT WORKS

As a result of processing sugar beets, a lot of "waste" or "condensate" water is produced daily by the factory. To give an idea of the amount of condensate water produced, each beet contains approximately 75% water; through processing, that water is removed and the Paul factory processes about 17,000 tons of beets daily. That's a lot of hot water! The condensate water is not a hazardous by-product; it's considered a co-product, but it does have to be disposed of properly. Some of it evaporates and is released as steam. "We get rid of the bulk of the water now by irrigating land with it, pumping the water through irrigation pipes to sprinklers, hiring someone to move the water and paying for the electricity to run the pumps," says Holbrook. Using the water for this 'green project' instead essentially recycles it, and in the end will be profitable through marketing the produce grown in the greenhouse. The greenhouse is a good "green" solution. Through 100% computer automation, the one hundred forty degree water is pumped from the factory to heat the greenhouse, then it's cooled, unnecessary minerals are removed, tomato-specific fertilizer is added, and the water is distributed to the individual tomato plants. Each plant requires one

gallon of water a day for optimum growing. Twelve-thousand individual plants can be grown on one acre. With each plant using one gallon of water per day, a lot of the condensate water is used. Schorr says, "This is a good project that's good for the environment, and we are producing a very high-quality tomato because it only gets the fertilizer and food it needs through the water."

SWEET SUCCESS

Currently, the experimental greenhouse employs two workers, operates about eight months out of the year, and produces fifty to sixty pounds of tomatoes from each plant. Once the twenty-acre facility is built, they will be able to produce tomatoes and cucumbers year-round and expect to hire up to sixty full-time employees. That's great news for the Mini-Cassia economy—and anyone who thinks there's nothing sweeter than home-grown-tasting tomatoes. ■

letter to the editor

> Dear IDAHO magazine

I appreciate the reviews you published in your December issue for Jo Ann Farnsworth's books. She is my sister-in-law, and a really remarkable person with a great deal of knowledge about the history of the Bear Lake Valley. The books consist of stories by people in the Bear Lake Valley, and since she is hearing impaired, she got the information by lip reading and entering it into a computer during the interviews or by taping the interviews and having other people listen and tell her what was on the tapes.

I think this is quite an accomplishment. For more information about Jo Ann and her books, go to www.hisandhersphoto.com and click on "Links."

Sincerely,

Ross V. Walker, Montpelier

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PHOTO BY RYAN PECK

A recording engineer and the tools of the trade—Jason Ringelstetter at his sound board.

Engineering Sound is Jason Ringelstetter's Dream Job

By Ryan Peck

Being a recording engineer is not a glamorous job. Listeners rarely think about the recording engineer when rocking out to their favorite album, and it's a shame, really. Talented recording engineers have helped to shape the landmark albums of the last sixty years. Geoff Emerick assisted The Beatles in the recording of albums such as *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and *Revolver*, and more recently, engineer Nigel Godrich helped Radiohead expand its sonic palette on albums such as *Kid A* and *OK Computer*. Those albums had great songs, but, equally as important, they had great sound—sound that was shaped and captured by gifted recording engineers. And though it may be a somewhat thankless profession, it is Idahoan Jason Ringelstetter's dream job.

Ringelstetter grew up in Wisconsin. "My dad was a cheese-maker and he liked to run cheese factories. I was his apprentice cheese-maker in high school," said Ringelstetter. He wasn't

just an up-and-coming cheese-maker in high school—he was also a drummer. "I played in every band there was … pep band, jazz band, marching band and orchestra band," he says.

After high school, Ringelstetter studied business at University of Wisconsin-Madison, later finishing up at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. "In college, I played in some rock bands. None of them went anywhere or are notable," says Ringelstetter with a grin. It was while recording a demo with one of these college bands that he was first exposed to the recording studio environment.

"There was this recording studio in Madison, Wisconsin. Our band went there to make a demo. They had two twenty-four-track machines synced together and a giant analog desk. I started thinking 'This is fascinating; maybe I could do this'," recalls Ringelstetter. He immediately began immersing himself in the art of recording.

"At that time, there were only three books on the subject of recording and the Internet was just getting going. Now there are many books, DVDs, and websites," says Ringelstetter. "I read the few books that were available, and instead of going to recording school, I just started investing in equipment. In 1994, I bought a revolutionary product called an ADAT [Alesis Digital Audio Tape]. It only had eight tracks and it cost me three thousand dollars!"

Within a short time, Ringelstetter had amassed enough equipment to begin recording in earnest. Without any formal training, he simply set to work. "The first year I recorded bands in the basement of my house … till my neighbor got mad. I recorded friends and other bands for free," says Ringelstetter. During this time, he became what he calls a "critical listener." "I delivered pizza in college," he said, smiling. "The only thing to do was listen to music. That's when I started doing critical listening to production and engineering."

After a year of driving around with hot pepperoni pies in his passenger seat and studying every nuance of sound coming through his car stereo speakers, Ringelstetter began getting calls from potential clients.

Ringelstetter's proudest moment so far at The Tonic Room was recording... Idahoan Josh Ritter.

One of his first clients also became his landlord. "This guy needed some commercial stuff done and he had this really cool building. He had some extra space that he let me use in exchange for doing production work for him," he says. "It was a great situation that got me out of hot water with my neighbor."

Even though he was making money recording, his main goal was to finish school and get a business related job—keeping recording as more of a hobby. After Ringelstetter wrapped up his business degree, he moved to Boise to take a day job with a telecom company. He still kept recording, however. "I brought all my gear [to Boise]. At first I recorded out of my house, then I met a karaoke guy (Center Stage Karaoke) who had a space where I could set up," said Ringelstetter.

Though his recording skills were growing rapidly, it wasn't long before he moved to Seattle to work as an accounts manager for Lucent Technologies. "I was the dot-com account specialist," he says. With more responsibility and a higher paying job, he gave up recording for a year. His dry spell ended in 2000, which was, as he puts it, a bad year for dot-coms. "After a year into it, my best friend called and asked if I wanted to move to Nashville and work for Garth Brooks' engineer. He called me on Friday and I quit my job on Monday. It paid about an eighth of what I had been making, but I wanted to do it," recalls Ringelstetter. "I went to work for Clair Brothers audio. They are the largest sound reinforcement in the world."

His new job eventually led to other gigs including touring with national bands and working with many high profile artists and producers. Eventually, Ringelstetter found himself back in Boise. Armed with confidence and knowledge, he knew it was time to fulfill his dream of opening his own professional recording studio. He did so with the help of Chris Parks, an Idahoan who had recently finished recording school.

"I met Chris Parks through a mutual friend. We met at Lucky 13. He said what he wanted to do and I said what I wanted to do. We put

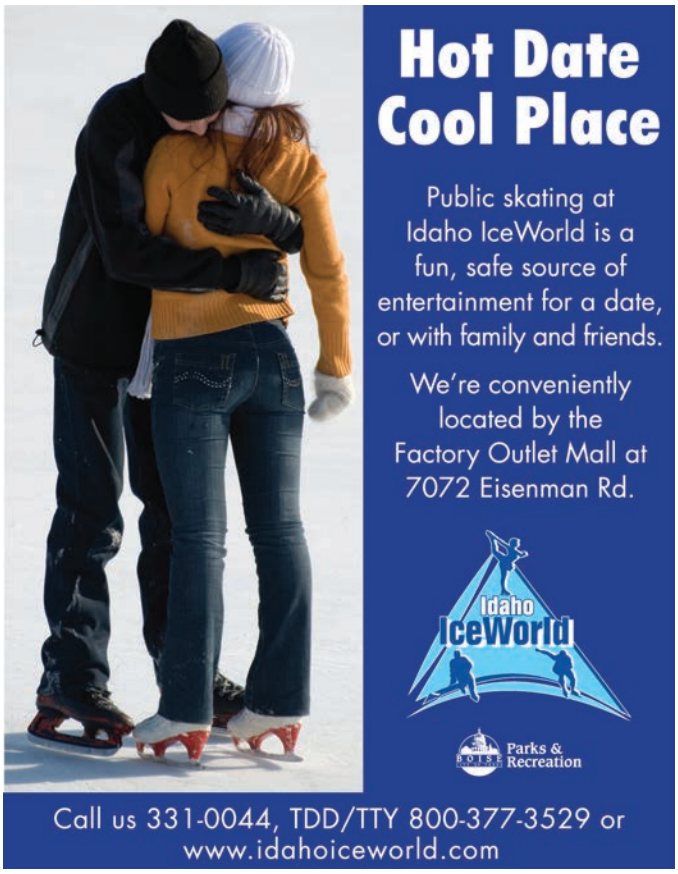
together a business plan that we are really confident in and opened the studio," he says. The studio, dubbed The Tonic Room, is a 2,500 square foot facility that has a control room, main tracking room, two isolation rooms, a lounge, kitchen, instrument room, and a mastering studio. Jason's experience with sound installations helped immensely in the construction of everything from the sixteen-inch thick soundproof walls to the rheostat controlled lights (to minimize buzzing). Since its opening in 2005, the studio has been an immense success. Ringelstetter attributes that to the quality of sound that comes out of the studio.

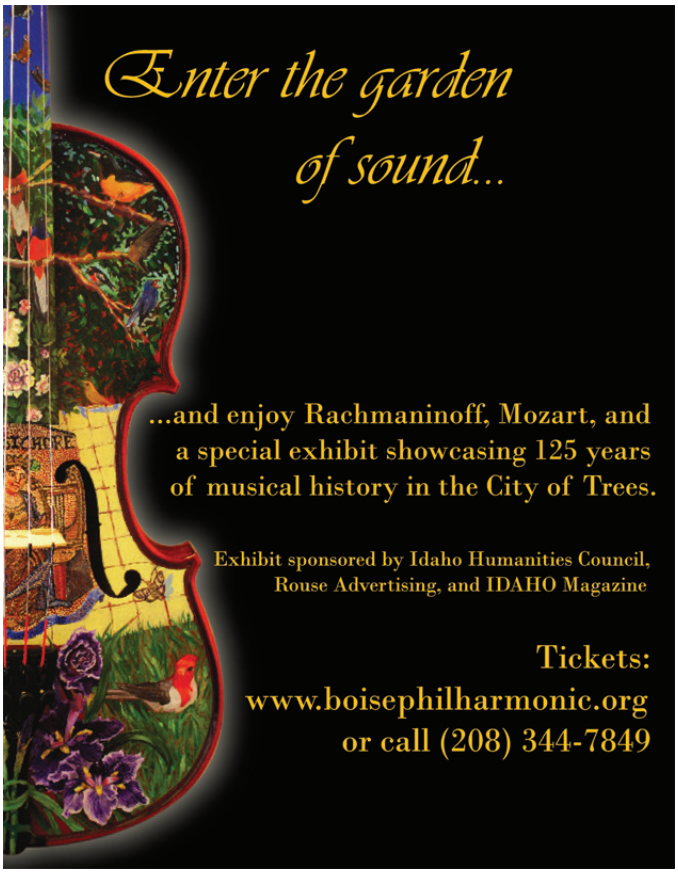
"We have never advertised. We've never really given a solid sales pitch, but before we had the doors open, we had Marcus Eaton in here recording. He was here doing pre-production while we were making sound panels. We have been steadily booked. We put all of our efforts and money into the product," he said.

Ringelstetter's proudest moment so far at The Tonic Room was recording and mixing an album by Idahoan Josh Ritter." He is probably one of the biggest national acts we've worked with. We've also had Queens of the Stone Age in here … members of the Black Eyed Peas … we recorded a band from Dublin…a band from Oxford England … a duo from France …"

With the success of his own recording studio, Ringelstetter has his sights set on an even more triumphant future. "We are reinvesting pretty heavily into the studio so we can become a regional studio. I think the future is not the two thousand dollar a day studios. What we've done is we've married Pro tools [a computer based recording system] with various classic and new pieces of analog gear and made a studio that you can rent for five hundred a day instead of two thousand," he says.

Ringlestetter has long ago given up his drumsticks for a recording desk. It was a move that he made in the interest of his most valuable commodity—his ears. "Drums can be loud and gnarly on your ears," he says. He doesn't miss playing music—he is happy to be helping other artists record their own music. Making sound that you can feel. ■





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My Private Idaho

By Dora Rollins

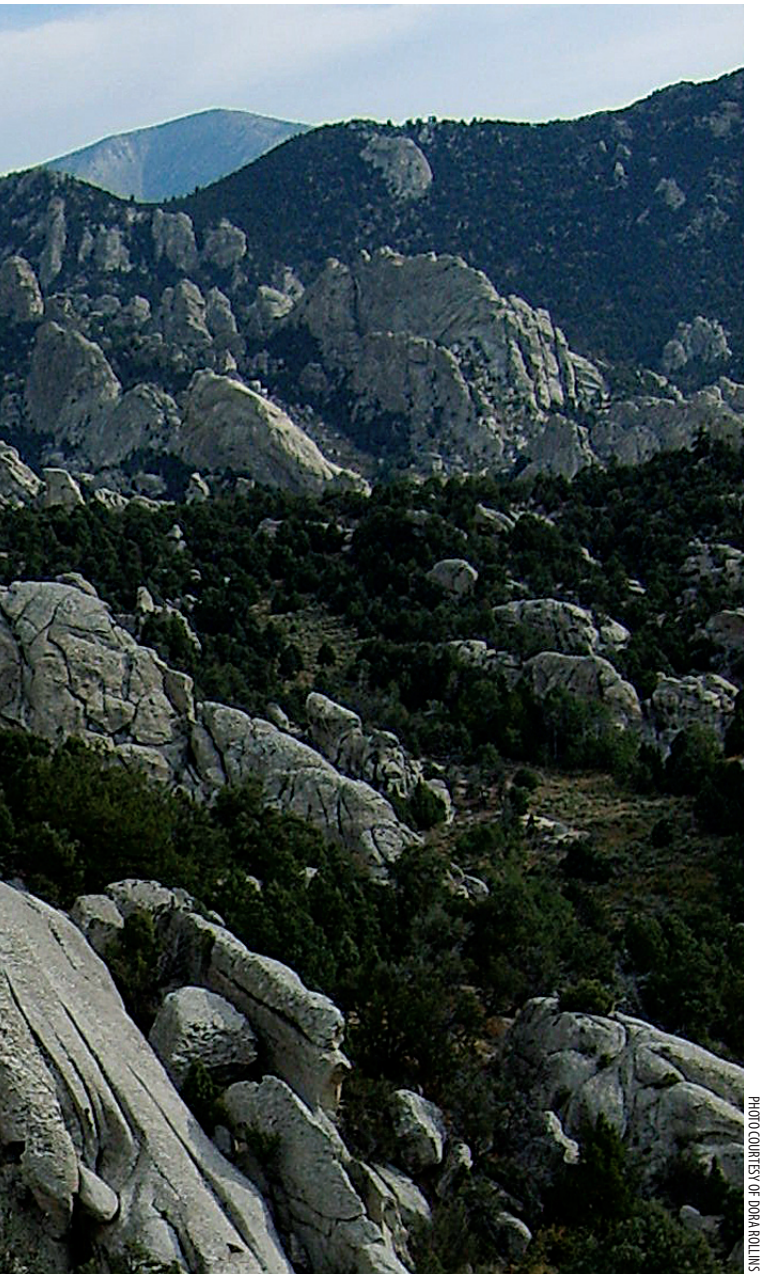

PHOTO COURTESY OF DORA ROLLINS

ABOVE: ***The City of Rocks—A world of rough stones.***

FAR LEFT: ***Peeking over the edge— Dora, at home in the City of Rocks***

LEFT: ***Looking for a route upwards—A climber on Bath Rock.***

I must admit to some apprehension about giving the City of Rocks any more publicity. I mean, when you've found a 14,000+-acre national treasure of awe-inspiring granite formations with more than seven hundred fifty developed climbing routes that lead to a fuller appreciation of life, it's rather easy to start thinking about it as a personal paradise. You may have to be a rock climber to fully grasp what "the City" has to offer in terms of fulfillment via self-powered vertical ascent of stone, but this southern Idaho metropolis will not disappoint any visitor.

My trepidation is also fueled by fellow climbers who often frown on others revealing their favorite rock wall, similar to that ultimate hunting spot or fishing hole. Perhaps a more practical approach is turning to the not necessarily negative qualities I found associated with the City, but certainly some important prerequisites to embarking on a stay there. For example, if your purpose is to climb, which is a pretty safe assumption, you have to be relatively tough to carry in all your weighty and awkwardly-shaped gear a few miles to get to prime, isolated routes. And if you go in July, you have to be able to tolerate heat and dust, which produces some impressive filth in just one day. Also in July (2007, at least) are the sudden thunderstorms, accompanied by torrential rain and gale-force winds (that is, enough to require bungee cord reinforcement on a staked camping tent and produce a good deal of anxiety from associated campers). And then there's the drive there, the better part of nine hours from Lewiston and more than half the length of the state, to a part of Idaho that truly is remote.

But I've been to the City twice now, and hope to make it an annual ritual, so you know it can't be too awful. It probably helps to be on the obsessive side, and tempted by the thought of conquering routes with names like "New York is NOT the City," "Mt. Everest," and "Private Idaho." I actually did the last one, and found it aptly christened (although I'm still not quite sure what goes into the rationale of those who establish routes). The gist is, every climb is as unique as its climber, and will therefore continue to change accordingly. And that means you're guaranteed to have an amazing experience.

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

PHOTO COURTESY OF DORA ROLLINS

FAR LEFT: ***From the ground up—Castle Rocks at midday.***

LEFT: ***Taking a break—Dora picnicking in one of the many campgrounds.***

For both my trips to the big City I felt like I was in good company, as that same "kid in a candy store" attitude was quite clearly shared by everyone I encountered. And it's infectious. After my first visit with a non-climbing enthusiast, I knew I had to recruit a partner who could truly understand the area's magnificence. A fairly new climber, Mary is definitely full of enthusiasm, which translates into serious dedication to improving her skills by spending almost every free moment on rock, but also having fun. An ideal find for me.

It didn't take long to convince Mary she needed a break from her fifty-plus-hour work week dealing with disgruntled customers and distracted employees to refocus on more important matters. She already knew from several weekend outings to nearby rocks she wanted more. So with advanced warning to her boss about a questionable return, she decided to stretch out the July 4 holiday and vowed not to think about her professional responsibilities for at least five days.

After loading up our climbing gear into Mary's shiny new, large-capacity SUV, plus associated clothing, mountain bikes, tent, sleeping bags, and coolers, we were glad it was just the two of us. We knew we were in for a long day of driving, but the anticipation kept our spirits high and the time from dragging. The scenery wasn't too bad either.

The gradual transition from traffic congestion, housing subdivisions, and pavement to wide open spaces, cattle troughs, and gravel gave us the assurance we were on the right track. Expertly maneuvering among the ruts and manure piles, Mary (having grown up on a ranch in Salmon) managed to drive us directly to our reserved campsite. And after setting up the tent and putting out the welcome mat, we started to feel like this was home.

Our first day quickly evolved into frustration, despite such great promise. We duly studied our freshly-purchased guidebook, and eagerly set off for what sounded like a great start. Problem was, we couldn't match up the picture to the directions. And while I can't roam more than a few miles from home without getting lost, Mary is a native Idahoan who knows how to read a map. Just not this particular one. But we put in a good effort, twice circling the entire length of the "often-deserted crag" called "Go West," clambering up the side amidst bushes and tree branches slapping us in the face and back, and even topping out to scout a place—any place—to anchor in. But nothing was matching the routes indicated in our book, and since we hadn't yet completed one established climb here, didn't feel confident enough to pioneer any. We probably should have clued in to the author's confession of "never [being] able to figure out the exact location" of one of the routes. And then there's the general consensus that climbing guides are not known for their accuracy or detail; talking to someone familiar with the area is almost always part of a successful climb.

After reluctantly admitting defeat, Mary and I reminded ourselves this was only one small portion of seven major "destinations areas" to climb at the City, so we decided to check in with some other climbers who looked like they knew what they were doing. Back at the City center, we were reassured by the sight of City veterans in action. One even offered to haul up our rope so we could safely test out a route, and others generously provided input on additional possibilities.

Being referred to the camp host, a small fit woman in her sixties with a great sense of humor, plenty of climbing experience, and an encyclopedic knowledge of the City, was one of our best tips. Dottie even marked up our guidebook with appropriate goals based on a brief interview of our skills and interests, and promised to lead a few for us next year. In response to our expressions of admiration at her skill level, she modestly

explained she'd been a City resident for the past eight years. Talk about taking advantage of opportunity…

With renewed enthusiasm fueled by excellent advice, we set off to explore the state park just three miles down the road. Castle Rocks, neighbor to the City, is yet another climbing oasis. Here we actually found shade, a relief in the mid-day summer heat. And after some fairly easy climbs, combined with a bit of problem-solving, we felt newly committed to our expedition. It didn't take long to get thoroughly dirty and thirsty, but we found relief on our way out at the ranger station, which had an outdoor water pump. Though we had to share it with a couple of other haggard-looking climbers, it was more than worth the brief wait as we exchanged greetings and found out we could score a shower for the price of our parking pass. Quite a deal—which we immediately took advantage of. Oh, to be clean!

Back at camp we had more visitors, but these were much smaller and hairier. At least four chipmunks—it was hard to nail down the number given their erratic dashing about—decided to check out who had invaded their space. Mary shared some of her peanuts, and they decided we were OK. In exchange, we were duly amused—and a bit jealous—by watching them balance their entire bodies on the edge of our wash basin to dip in for a drink.

That evening Mary unpacked the popcorn and tried to conjure up childhood camping memories with the rising aluminum bubble, but her tiny camp stove would not cooperate. Instead of the heavenly smell of popcorn, it was just a sad stench. More chipmunk food, we assumed. That was when we learned these were some high-end rodents, because they wouldn't touch the failed snack. It sat there for the rest of our stay, and we had to add it to our garbage when we cleaned camp.

By Day 2 we were feeling like we belonged—or at least that we knew where we were going. We headed back to Castle Rocks for some multi-pitch experience on the advice of some City old-timers and another guidebook, and it actually panned out this time. As we switched leads, Mary and I made the necessary adjustments to improve our efficiency and comfort levels. The only thing we lacked was water. It doesn't occur to you when you've got all this other stuff to pack up, and you're on the ground and fully hydrated. But after a couple of hours of exertion in direct sunlight, it becomes quite a fixation. Next time.

We descended to the ground that afternoon just in time to watch the storm clouds roll in, and as we drove into camp, our tent was about ready to leave without

INNOVATION

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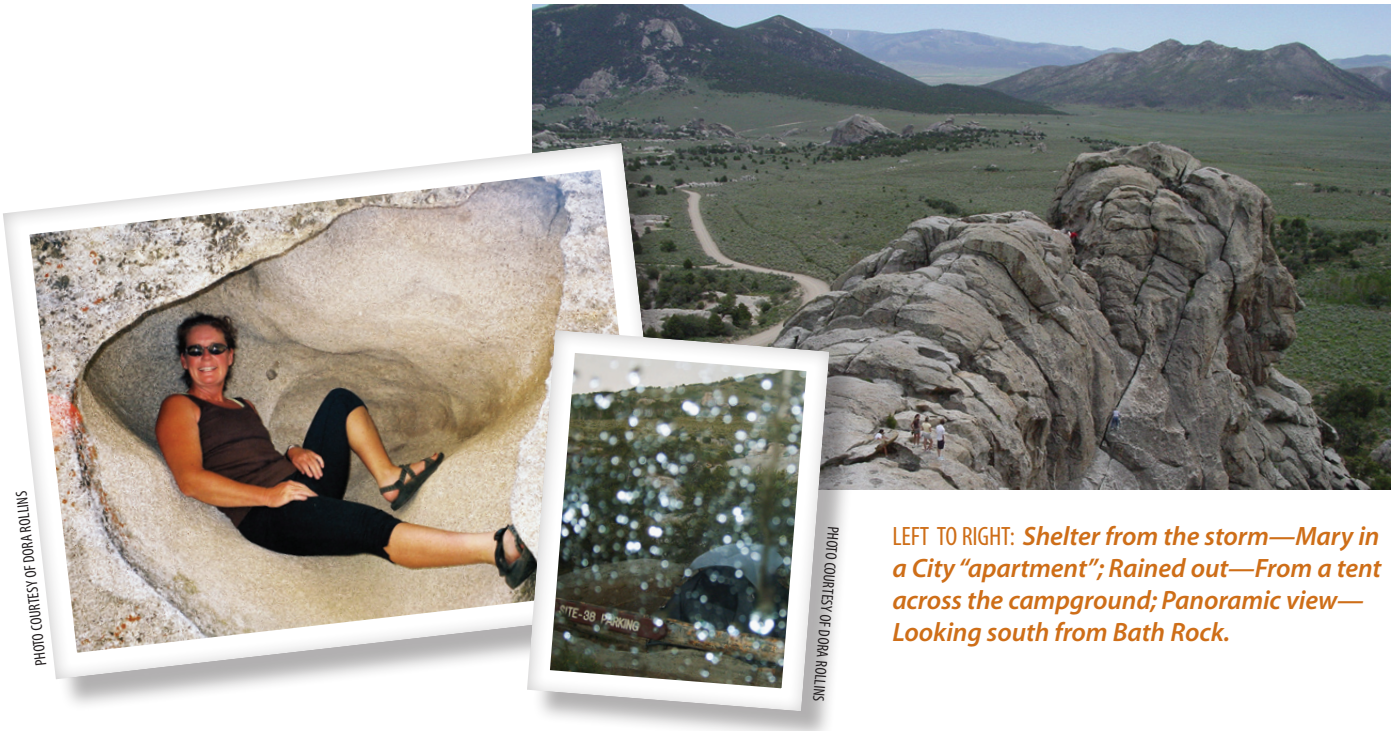

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LEFT TO RIGHT: ***Shelter from the storm—Mary in a City "apartment"; Rained out—From a tent across the campground; Panoramic view—Looking south from Bath Rock.***

us. The wind had sprung up to the degree that we had to conduct an urgent search for tie-downs, and then rush back to the safety of our vehicle to helplessly watch our temporary bedroom be tossed about, stretched at the seams, and subjected to an impressive downpour for the next half hour.

As we started making plans to cut short our stay, the rain slowed and then stopped, followed by parting clouds and emerging sunshine. Another chance. Determined to make the last day our best, we set out to plan our agenda with the help of Dottie, who managed to pump us up even more with the potentialities of what lay in store at the City's edges. It would take a few miles to pack in, but there was little likelihood of competition for routes, and if we followed her schedule, could climb in shade the whole day.

A good night's rest would have been nice. But it was Independence Day weekend, so not likely anywhere in the country. Here, however, fireworks are banned. And we never did hear any explosions. Instead it was a reunion across the way, a large group apparently oblivious of their noise level. Perhaps they were mistakenly assured of privacy given their distance from other occupied campsites. Alas, the rock formations were acoustically unfavorable for weary climbers in need of rejuvenating sleep.

Amidst grumbles about our overly exuberant new late-night neighbors, Mary and I set off as planned the following morning, and soon were pleasantly surprised to match our physical surroundings with the description in the guidebook—thanks to some supplemental assistance from Dottie, of course. More routes to tick off our list, and confidence to move on. Which we did, just as a group of three fellow travelers showed up to take our place and we finished our trip down the wall.

The next stop on our agenda was more dubious, and we eventually learned we had made a wrong turn and never made it to where Dottie had directed. But we found some bolts nonetheless, and I decided to embark on the unknown. A troubled start. Up a few feet, down, up again, down again—FAST. Try a different approach. OK, the third—or fourth—time worked. Sort of. I kept going, at least for awhile. And then I got stumped. The confidence slipped away, and I had to struggle to convince myself to "just go for it," knowing down-climbing at this point was not going to be any easier, and Mary was getting tired of my indecisiveness.

After much too long a pause, some helpful advice from Mary to just cheat and grab the rope, I made the final move. Waves of relief, triumph, and then shades of humility, as I realized this had not exactly been a stellar performance. I was so focused on completing the route that time had stopped for me. Not so for Mary, stuck at the bottom. She was kind enough not to mention the new set of storm clouds rolling in until my feet hit dirt, but then it was time to GO.

Next time…

Tourist Information

If by chance you actually want to engage in an activity other than climbing at the City of Rocks, you're in luck. The City offers hiking, mountain biking, skiing, and horseback riding on the thirty miles of trails within the reserve, in addition to opportunities to observe wagon ruts from pioneers traveling the California Trail one hundred sixty-four years ago and granite that dates back 2.5 billion years.

Camping: Because you will undoubtedly need to spend a few days here to take it all in, you can choose from two campgrounds with a total of one hundred five sites, three of which are designed for twelve to twenty-five people. The upper ("primitive") campground, featuring a tent bed, picnic table, and fire grate at each spot, many nestled in between—yes, ROCKS—also offers incredible views of more rocks. Clean outhouses are scattered throughout the campground, and a water pump is centrally located. The lower (Smoky Mountain) campground, just finished in 2007 and technically part of Castle Rocks State Park, is designed for RVs, with paved pull-ups and electrical hookups. This is also where you can score a shower if you pay four dollars for parking at the entrance to Castle Rocks three miles down the road.

Idaho Parks and Recreation makes the reservation process for your stay at the City extremely simple given the detailed information on their website about what you will get for your modest fee of twelve dollars per night (for the "primitive" individual sites; you pay about twice that if you want to watch TV in your RV). Just go to https://secure.camis.com/IDPR/viewer.aspx, choose your location, and you can find out which sites offer shade, how far they are from toilets, and even what they look like.

The National Park Service website (nps.gov) offers additional information you might want to know about the City before taking up residence. For example, summer temperatures range from 32 to 100°F and rainfall doesn't typically exceed fifteen inches. (I missed the bit about afternoon thundershowers in July and August before my trips.) The nearest city with a five-digit population is Burley, from which you can charter a plane and shorten your distance to the City to only forty-five miles. For a more familiar-sounding city, such as Twin Falls or Pocatello, you'll need to travel about twice that far. ■

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[It] is a city not built by hands, neither is it constructed out of wood or brick, but is made of a material more enduring than either … It is, in fact, a city of rocks … The space between the rocks is sufficiently wide to admit a horse and rider, so that one can ride in between and around them. They remind one of a grave yard, so solemn the place appears, and as one rambles among these rocks it seems to him almost as if he were trespassing upon sacred ground.

— [Charles Nelson Teeter (September 1865), quoted in Wells, untitled manuscript, p.40][1]

City of Rocks

An Historical Sketch

By Gena K. Lott

Located in southern Idaho, thirty miles south of Burley and two miles north of the Utah border, is a 13,000 acre National Reserve, called the City of Rocks. Year round these granite monoliths and formations draw locals and tourists to camp, hike, picnic, and climb. Rock climbers make up the largest population of visitors to this geological wonder, some coming from as far away as Germany and Scandinavia. But few of these visitors are familiar with the exciting history of the City. It's a small spot on the map—about one third the size of Disneyland—but it played a large role in the growth of the West.

Some time before 1847, emigrants headed for California gave the City of Rocks its name. Erosion created unique caves, windows, and indentures, replicating an immense silent city of granite. Some rocks resemble pyramids, others

look like great animals turned to stone. The names of many of the rock formations are descriptive of their shapes: Bread loaves, bathtub rock, turtles, elephant rock, Twin Sisters, and the castle. Other areas flaunt tunnels and openings similar to columns and doorways of ancient ruins.

As early as 1848, many wagon trains headed west for Oregon or California passed through the City of Rocks. The settlement of Salt Lake City enticed western bound trains to replenish dwindling food supplies and mend wagons and harnesses for the last leg of the journey. Leaving the new city, wagon trains followed the Salt Lake Alternate Trail which led travelers to the City of Rocks: a junction hub on the California/Oregon trails. Here, wagon trains rested among sagebrush and thigh-high grasses shaded by cedar, or juniper trees. This prolonged stop prepared the travelers for the challenging Humboldt River crossing and the Forty-mile Desert still ahead in Nevada's wasteland.

Home to the Shoshone

The Shoshone Indians had summered in and around the City for decades before the overland migration to Oregon and California began. Evidence shows the Indians made camp on the southern end of The City, at Twin Sisters, where they performed ceremonial dances.[2] Streams and underground springs nurtured summer grasses in the vicinity: good feed for Shoshone horses. Small game and roots were abundant, and piñón trees dotted the area, providing a harvest of pine nuts for the Indians each autumn. Encroachment by whites on Indian range during westward migration was undoubtedly a factor in the legendary Almo Massacre in 1861 at the City of Rocks.

The Almo Massacre

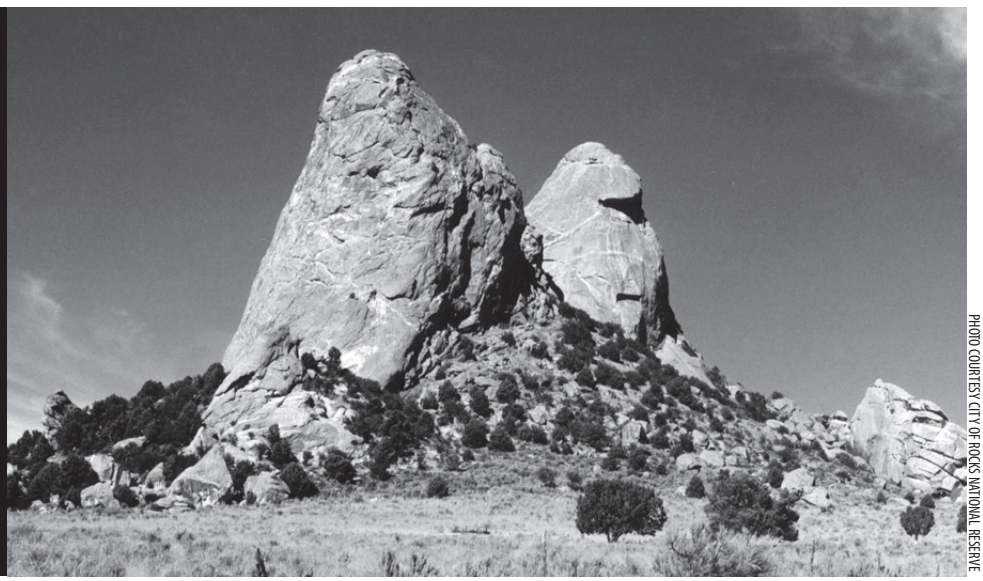
The wagon train was exceptionally large; more than sixty wagons carried three hundred men, women, and children westward. This group of pioneers, traveling to Oregon, passed through Fort Hall and crossed the Sublette Cut-off to join the California Trail. At the City of Rocks the pioneers planned a prolonged stop to feed and rest their stock before the arduous Nevada crossing. Because of increasing hostilities with the Indians, the train was well stocked with guns and ammunition, but the travelers were not prepared for the size of the war party tracking them.

According to Charles Walgamott, an early Idaho historian, the war party consisted of seven tribes: Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Ute, Shoshone, Paiute, Cayuse, and Bannock Indians.[3] These braves wanted scalps as revenge for a white raid on an Indian village in the Dakotas. The Indians planned their strategy and arrived at Almo Creek before the wagon train, making camp at today's Indian Grove.

The wagon train followed Almo

OPPOSITE: ***The work of wind and water—Window Rock.***

RIGHT: ***Sentinels in the desert—Twin Sisters rise above the surrounding land.***



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LEFT: ***Rough wilderness—View from above Indian Grove.***

OPPOSITE: ***Overview—Smoky Mountain viewed from Steinfells Dome.***

Creek from the north through the grassy valley flanked by snow-capped mountain peaks. Here, about two miles from the City of Rocks, the pioneers prepared to spend the night. The next morning when the wagons left the creek, the war party attacked. The pioneers created a barely defensible position by circling the wagons and throwing up banks of earth to hide the women and children.

At day's end, the pioneers were desperate. They were in the open, surrounded by the rocky formations of the City where the Indians could hide and watch the train. At noon the sun baked the rocks raising temperatures into the hundreds; the only shade was under the wagons. By the end of the second day the pioneers' water was nearly gone. One group of men started digging a well. The area was criss-crossed with springs and creeks and they hoped to dig deep enough to find water. However, the sandy soil made progress slow and the diggers were hampered in their movements. Showing themselves meant an arrow from the vigilant Indians. When darkness came, several men left the safety of the wagons and tried to sneak back to the creek. Shots and cries of agony told those waiting that their fellows would not return.

On the fourth day, the train's scout determined that the pioneers could not survive without help. While making desperate plans to leave, a single woman sought him out. She was a dead shot with a rifle and was anxious to leave the dwindling safety of the train's enclosure to accompany the scout. Once darkness fell, the two left the train and crawled through the sagebrush to the base of nearby Smoky Mountain. The scout's knowledge of where to find water helped them reach Brigham City, Utah, where they raised the alarm.

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the scout and his companion, a second party also left the wagon train on the fourth night. A man and two women, one a nursing mother, made good their get-away. According to local accounts of the story, the mother carried her infant tied to her chest with a shawl as she and her two companions crawled away from the wagon train. This group found the Raft River, east of the City of Rocks, where they stayed, surviving on rose hips and roots, until rescued by the party from Brigham City.[4]

When the rescue party finally arrived at the massacre site, the partially

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

dug well had been filled with the bodies of dead emigrants. The stock was gone and the wagons had been burned.

Modern historians look askance at Walgamott's history of the massacre. The contention is that little remains to substantiate the story and no area newspapers printed anything about the event. Historians also argue that such a death toll—more than two hundred ninety victims—is unprecedented. In most chronicled confrontations between wagon trains and Native Americans, the deaths would tally fewer than fifty.[5]

However, Walgamott visited the massacre site in 1875. He said that the trenches the pioneers had dug under the wagons were still visible. Additionally, his research included interviews with people who knew the survivors.

"[I have] taken considerable pains to verify what [I] believe [I] saw and heard," Walgamott said in his book: *Six Decades Back*. Furthermore, his story coincides with those of Almo residents, who in the early days of the settlement, found guns and the remains of burned or buried wagons in the area.

In 1938 the Sons and Daughters of Idaho Pioneers placed a monument on the site to commemorate the massacre and honor the pioneers who died there.

The Kelton Stage

The end of western expansion in 1869 was not the end of the Salt Lake Alternate Trail and the junction at the City of Rocks. Freight lines regularly used the road as did local Pony Express riders. Then in 1862, gold was found in Boise Basin, and a regular freight line began to run between the gold fields and Kelton, Utah, a train connection to points east. Eventually, the Kelton stage line was born.

A stage station was constructed from adobe bricks at the southeast entrance to the City of Rocks. Similar stations sprang up at Goose Creek Summit, about ten miles due west and on the west side of Oakley, some twenty miles northwest of the City. The stage also had a connection at Albion. From there it headed west to Rock Creek Station. At Rock Creek the stage turned northwest crossing the Snake River on its way to Boise.

The station at the City of Rocks was considered a "Home" station. Like today's bed-and-breakfast, it was a private home, which encouraged boarders and provided meals. These boarders subsidized the meager farm living the family earned.

In 1882 while making a run between Kelton and Albion, two bandits held up the stage. The stage was transporting gold bullion to cavalry troops in Boise: around $150,000 worth, according to local legends. Upon capturing the loot, the men headed south, but a posse from Albion galloped close behind. Pursued and desperate, one bandit having been shot by the stage driver, they detoured into the City of Rocks. The two buried the treasure near what is now called Treasure Rock. The injured man died of his wounds, the other was caught and sent to prison, and the treasure was never recovered. As late as the 1970s, local people searched the City for the mys-

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE

Angle of repose—Treasure Rock stands starkly in the sunlight.

terious treasure without success.

The Oregon Pacific railroad built a line from Boise southeast in the late 1880s ending the Kelton/Boise stage runs. The station house at The City remained intact until around 1920 when an Almo resident dismantled it and used the materials to build out-buildings on his dry farm.

Once the glory days of the West had passed, people around the City of Rocks settled down to cattle ranching and dry farming. The area continues to support farms and ranches today.

More Information

The only sign of the area's rich history remains in the pioneer inscriptions on various rocks in the City. Using wagon axle grease, the pioneers wrote names and dates as a legacy of their journeys across the continent. Making the trip of about three hours from Salt Lake City to see these pioneer remnants, as well as this geological wonder, is well worth the time. Driving, head north on I-15 and at Tremonton, Utah take I-84 west. Follow I-84 to exit 245 in Idaho. Turn west and follow state route 77 to Elba. Turn south and follow the signs. The road becomes gravel on this stretch, but is generally maintained.

From Boise, head south on I-84 to Burley, a trip of about two and a half hours. Take exit 208 south and travel through Burley to Highway 27. Follow 27 to Oakley, a twenty mile drive. Turn east at Oakley's Main Street and follow the signs southeast for nineteen miles. Part of this road is dirt.

For additional information about the City of Rocks and surrounding area go to www.nps.gov/ciro. ■

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ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

High and Dry

By Les Tanner

GRAVEL!" I shouted.

"Where?" Al shouted back.

"Right over...", but I didn't get a chance to finish.

I didn't need to. By the time it would have taken to complete the sentence, the boat had scraped its way far up the low rocky bar.

"Thanks, Les," said Al.

I think I detected a note of sarcasm in his voice, but I could have been wrong.

It had been a glorious July morning when Al and I headed over to the Snake River to try out his new jet boat.

The river was unusually low, and the nearest place we could launch was at Homedale. (We'd been told by someone in a bait shop in Nampa that the ramp at the upper dam at Lake Lowell was available, but we decided not to try that one. I'm still not sure why that person thought we could get to the Snake River from Lake Lowell.)

It was about 10:00 a.m. when we started up river. At more than one spot along the way, the river split into two or more channels around small islands, and it was

easy to see which of the channels was the deepest. Being more intent on how the boat was running and where we might fish, however, we didn't pay much attention to our exact route.

We made it all the way up to Walter's Ferry by mid-afternoon, catching a few fish along the way and enjoying the nice weather and the scenery.

About 4:00 p.m., Al reluctantly admitted that it was time to head back. "We want to make sure we have enough light to find the takeout," he explained.

It was the right idea, but we loitered a little too long in a couple of places, and the sun was quite low in the sky when we reached the last set of three river channels, just east of Homedale.

Al brought the boat to a stop, and we surveyed what lay ahead.

"Which one did we come up?" asked Al.

"I don't have a clue," I responded.

"Well, we have three choices," said Al. "Pick one."

"Not my boat," I said. "You pick."

"Okay, I choose the middle one," he said. "But keep a close eye out for rocks and shallows."

He gunned the motor, swung the boat around, and aimed it down the chosen channel. Only then did we realize that we were headed directly into the sun which had, at that precise moment, reached the horizon.

"I can't see a thing!" he hollered.

"I can't, either," I hollered back.

But then I did see something, and what I saw was rather unsettling. Ahead and to the right lay a long, low gravel bar.

That's when I decided I'd better bring "GRAVEL!" into the conversation.

As it turned out, Al had seen gravel, too—but on the left—and he'd turned the boat directly into the gravel I'd seen.

We took a few minutes to compose ourselves before we stepped out of the boat—there was no chance of us getting wet; we were completely landlocked—to see what was what.

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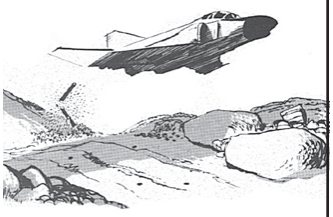

ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN

The good news was that there was virtually no damage to the boat, since the bar was mostly sand.

The bad news was that there was no way in the world that we'd be able to move the boat back into the river. It was too heavy.

And to add to our misery—at the moment, anyway—we had an audience. There was a wood processing mill on the river bank a hundred yards to the south of us, and a half-dozen or so night-shift workers were outside taking a break when we decided to play Evel Knievel. They weren't a particularly sympathetic audience, either, as soon as they found out we weren't hurt. We couldn't hear what they were saying, but they were clearly having a good time at our expense.

"How about a hand?" Al shouted. Now there was a straight-line if I ever heard one.

After the applause died down, one of the workers called, "There's no way we can get over there to help you."

"Any suggestions?" Al called back.

"I've got a friend in Homedale who's got a boat," someone yelled. "I'll call him to come up and get you guys off. Just don't go anywhere in the meantime." As if.

"Great!" hollered Al. "Thanks."

It was growing dark by the time we heard a motorboat coming up the north channel—the deep channel, we realized—so we relaxed somewhat, knowing it was just a matter of time. But then we couldn't hear the motor any more. Behind the island? False alarm? Maybe it was someone else.

Our audience had returned to work by then, so we went back to waiting for our rescuer.

Now some things are more unsettling than others, and the idea that he'd called the sheriff was one of those things.

Another half-hour passed before we heard another motorboat. This had to be the guy. No one else would be out on the river after dark. But within minutes, that motor died, too. What was going on?

About forty-five minutes later, we heard someone yell from the direction of the mill: "You guys still there?"

"'Fraid so. What's going on? Where's the rescue boat?"

"My buddy just phoned. He's already broken two shear pins on the rocks, and he's not about ready to try it again."

"Now what?" asked Al. It was already after 10:00 p.m., and we didn't feel like spending the night out there.

"This south channel isn't too wide or deep. You could probably swim over," the man called.

"Thanks," replied Al. "We'll think about it."

I'm not much of a swimmer, so I wasn't thrilled with the idea. Al is less of a coward, so he volunteered to give it a try. He got out of his clothes, put them in a plastic bag and headed off across the channel.

"Phone my wife to let her know we'll be a tad late getting home," I called after him.

"Will do," he replied

As it turned out, Al was able to wade across, but just barely, holding the bag of clothes above his head.

When he reached the other side, he called out, "It's a tough wade, Les. I'll see if I can find a way of getting you and the boat off the bar."

He disappeared into the dark, but thirty minutes later, he was back at the river bank.

"There's a home over here. The owner knows a man in Nampa who's got a tow truck with a long cable on it. He called him, and he'll be here in a while. I'm going to wait up in the house until the fellow shows up."

"Sounds fine," I said. "Did you call my wife?"

"Yep."

"Thanks."

The next hour or so passed rather slowly. I wasn't cold, and I

had sandwiches and water, but I could imagine Al up there in a big cozy living room, probably watching television, drinking lemonade and munching on potato chips.

At long last, I saw the lights of a truck coming along the south bank, and soon Al and the two men were unwinding the cable from the truck's winch.

There was a slight problem, however. The cable reached only halfway to the gravel bar.

About that time, one of the workers from the mill came out and asked how we were doing. When Al explained the situation, the worker was sympathetic, but since there was apparently nothing he could do, he went back inside.

"Now what?" I called over to Al.

"I think you'll be okay wading over like I did, if you're careful. We'll be ready to help you. Leave everything in the boat, and I'll come get it in the morning."

Well, it wasn't the most enjoyable thing I've ever done, but I managed to get across without incident.

I was just tucking in my shirt when someone came out of the mill and told us that he'd just called the sheriff.

Now some things are more unsettling than others, and the idea that he'd called the sheriff was one of those things.

The reason? We were in Owyhee County, and the sheriff at that time was Tim Nettleton, possibly the last of the "Wild West Lawmen." Among other things, Nettleton had been the one who'd finally tracked down and brought in Claude Dallas.

And now someone had roused Tim out of bed, after midnight, to tell him that he'd have to drive all the way down from Murphy to Homedale to rescue two guys who'd had a boating accident.

He was definitely not going to be a happy camper when he found out what had really happened.

Neither were we. And we had nowhere to hide, except maybe back on the gravel bar.

So there we sat, two miserable and rather dumb amateur boaters, waiting for what may come.

And I couldn't have imagined a worse scenario, because some forty-five minutes later we saw tearing down the road, not one but three official vehicles, one driven by Sheriff Nettleton, one by one of his deputies, and one by a highway patrol officer stationed in Homedale—and all had their red and blue lights flashing.

Of course, every employee at the mill was outside by now, ready to enjoy the rest of the show.

Loyal fishing buddy that I am, I hitched a ride back to Caldwell with the tow-truck driver, leaving Al to deal with Tim.

Epilogue

I got home around 1:30 a.m. Ruby was happy to see me, of course, and thanked me for having Al call her.

"I suppose I'd better call Al's wife and tell her that he'll be even later than we expected," I said.

I didn't know that someone could answer a phone almost before it rang. Turns out that Al had called my wife, but hadn't called his wife. She'd been waiting for almost six hours without any idea of where he was.

I finally got up enough nerve to call Al the next afternoon, to see how things had turned out. He didn't sound mad, even though he'd had a lot of explaining to do before he was able to appease the sheriff, who let him off with more than a few not-so-gentle remarks. He'd finally arrived home around 2:30.

As far as the boat was concerned, Al had convinced a neighbor to go out with him that morning to help get it off the bar. When they got there, in the neighbor's boat, they were just in time to keep Al's boat from floating all the way down to Brownlee Reservoir. During the night, enough water had been released from Swan Falls Dam to nearly cover the infamous gravel bar.

For some reason, Al never asked me to go fishing with him again. ■

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL RYAN

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL RYAN

LEFT: ***Walls of snow—State Highway 37, south of American Falls.***

ABOVE ***The man in charge—Art Hoult, ISTD roads supervisor.***

The Worst Winter of Them All

By Bill Ryan

So you're sick of winter and think the cold and snow can't get much worse? Let me tell you about the "Great Winter" of 1948-49 that old timers still talk about.

The central figure in my story is a man named Art Hoult, who was the Idaho Highway Department's maintenance supervisor for all federal and state highways from Raft River to Wyoming and from the Utah line to Montana.

The agonies experienced in trying to keep highways open during the Great Winter are described in Hoult's professional journals, which now rest in the Idaho State University Archives as a memorial to his life as an engineer. Hoult died in 1970.

All of the federal and state roads mentioned were two-lane asphalt paved highways built to standards of the 1920s and 1930s. Cell phones had not yet been developed.

Official records at the National Weather Service office in Pocatello show that virtually every week between Nov. 21, 1948 and Feb. 19, 1949 brought a massive new storm to eastern Idaho. This is thirteen consecutive weeks of snow, accompanied by high winds and sub-freezing or below zero weather.

That winter's icy curtain rose on Nov. 26, the day after Thanksgiving, with 3.5 inches of snow in Pocatello, blown by winds up to twenty-five miles an hour. Hoult's men, on snowplows and sanders, had little trouble clearing the roads after this storm.

But snow fell almost continually on Dec. 1, 2, 3 and 4, leaving six inches on the ground, followed by more snow and wind on the 5th. The crews were hard pressed to keep the highways open but were winning the battle when another blizzard struck on Dec. 7.

What Art Hoult's journal calls a blizzard probably may not meet the

strict definition of "blizzard." But he wrote in terse, unemotional language. It is certain that he meant it when he wrote in Dec. 7, "Blizzard in Pocatello and other places. Trouble on Rockland Road (Idaho 37) and Aberdeen road (Idaho 39). Mink Creek closed. U.S. Highway 30 closed between Pebble and Bancroft."

Hoult had ordered maintenance foreman Johnny Goddard to take a rotary plow and open Mink Creek (south of Pocatello) while the American Falls crew worked in its area. But after hearing about the Highway 30 closure, Hoult wrote, "Goddard and I [went] to [the] trouble to open [it], leaving at 5:30 p.m. Worked all night. Very bad. To Lava (Hot Springs) for short rest, 3 a.m. Left Lava 7 a.m. to widen road to Soda (Springs). Left Soda at noon for Mink Creek to open road. Home 4:30 p.m. Tired."

...thirteen consecutive weeks of snow, accompanied by high winds and subfreezing or below zero weather.

For the following week, men and machines worked to clear the blocked highways and to widen the one-way trenches the plows had dug to restore a semblance of traffic.

A relatively minor storm came on Monday, Dec., 20, 1948, and most of the heavily-traveled roads were opened by that evening.

"Dec. 31 Fri. Blizzard. Rotary working. Good west but bad east. Call from Laird. Bad ice conditions near Blue Dome."

This entry, noting the phone call from Bill Laird, maintenance man at Dubois, was Hoult's final 1948 page. But it foretold one of the major highway problems of the entire winter – the ice buildup on Birch Creek forced it to flow on Idaho Highway 28 between Terreton and Salmon.

The year 1949 bounced into eastern Idaho on a massive snowstorm, high winds and zero temperatures. On New Years Day, a Saturday, Hoult left for the trouble at Birch Creek at 9 a.m. He found the ice about four inches thick in the highway trench with the full flow of the creek running over the ice and blocking the road for about a half mile. Hoult noted that blasting would be required.

Records at the National Weather Service show clear skies and below freezing to sub-zero weather between New Years Day and noon, Jan. 7th in Pocatello.

New snow, blown by winds upwards of thirty-five miles per hour, started on the evening of the 7th and continued well into the next day, bringing the total on the ground to six inches and more blocked highways.

On Jan. 14, almost four inches of new snow fell, driven by thirty-three mph winds.

The next six days, the mercury hovered between eleven degrees below zero and fourteen above. More snow fell on Jan. 20 and 21, raising the depth to fourteen inches at the Pocatello airport. Then the wind rose again and more snow fell.

The following paragraph, in Hoult's words, describes the battle to keep the roads open. The words in parentheses are added to clarify Hoult's terse writing.

"Jan. 21, Fri. Report 30 closed west of American Falls. Rockland also closed. High winds and drifting snow. Visibility zero. Three trucks required to hold (open) 30 west of American Falls. (American Falls maintenance man) Rowlands called at midnight advising two (abandoned) coal trucks in center of road and can't be moved by our big Oshkosh (heavy duty rotary plow) and (our) crews abandoned road until morning. All need rest.

Goddard called at 1 a.m. advising 30 almost closed at Tallmadge (east of Bancroft). Rotary left Pocatello at 2 a.m. to open."

The coal trucks were removed from the roadway the next day, then the Oshkosh became disabled with fuel pump trouble and was towed back to American Falls. This left the towns of Rockland and Roy again cut off from the world.

On January 23rd, the school superintendent phoned from Rockland asking Hoult about opening the Roy road for the children. "Told him it would be the next move for the rotary after cleaning up west of American Falls."

The record low temperature for Pocatello to that date was set between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 25,

1949. It was 31.4 degrees below zero.

It only got down to minus twenty-three the following night. Another two and a half inches of snow fell in the next few days, raising the depth on the ground to eighteen inches. Twenty-foot drifts were reported in some places.

January 31st dawned with twenty-one inches of snow on the ground at the Pocatello airport.

Continuous snow and high winds marked the blinding storm of February 4, 5, and 6. All roads in the area were closed by noon on Friday the 4th. Three heavy snowplow trucks and their drivers were marooned between Pocatello and American Falls and between Aberdeen and Blackfoot.

Houlton described the situation as the "worst in highway history."

Caravans of travelers were stranded at Coldwater Camp, between American Falls and Raft River, with food and supplies dropped to them from planes. The week between February 4 and 11 saw many eastern Idaho towns in virtual isolation with surface traffic at a standstill.

The week between February 4 and 11 saw many eastern Idaho towns in virtual isolation with surface traffic at a standstill.

Coal supplies ran low; deliveries were made only to "folks who had run out," says a Pocatellan who remembers that winter.

Cattlemen reported animals by the hundreds frozen or starved to death; trains were stalled on several occasions, and some food stores were hard hit when orders failed to arrive.

One snowplow operator experienced a breakdown on deserted U.S. 26 near Taber in Bingham County and was forced to walk fifteen miles back to Moreland in the teeth of the storm.

Houlton's eventual solution to get Birch Creek's main channel off State Highway 28 was to borrow bulldozers from local contractors and use them to break through the drifts. Crawler tractors and concrete rippers proved to be the only machines that could penetrate the thick ice.

Rotary plows were still working to widen the highway trenches through deep snow as late as March 14.

Houlton's last journal reference to the Great Winter is his entry of April 30, which reads, "Four inches new snow and still snowing." But that snow did not stick.

Next came the repairs to the roads, which had been severely damaged by frost, water, and crawler tractors.

Never since has such a severe winter hit southern Idaho. The Idaho Transportation Department is now better prepared, with more manpower and more powerful snow removal equipment.

The Interstate highways, built since Houlton's time, were designed to avoid deep cuts, which are a natural attraction for drifting snow.

So if you hear someone beefing about the current winter, tell them about the Great Winter of 1948-49. Believe me, it was! ■

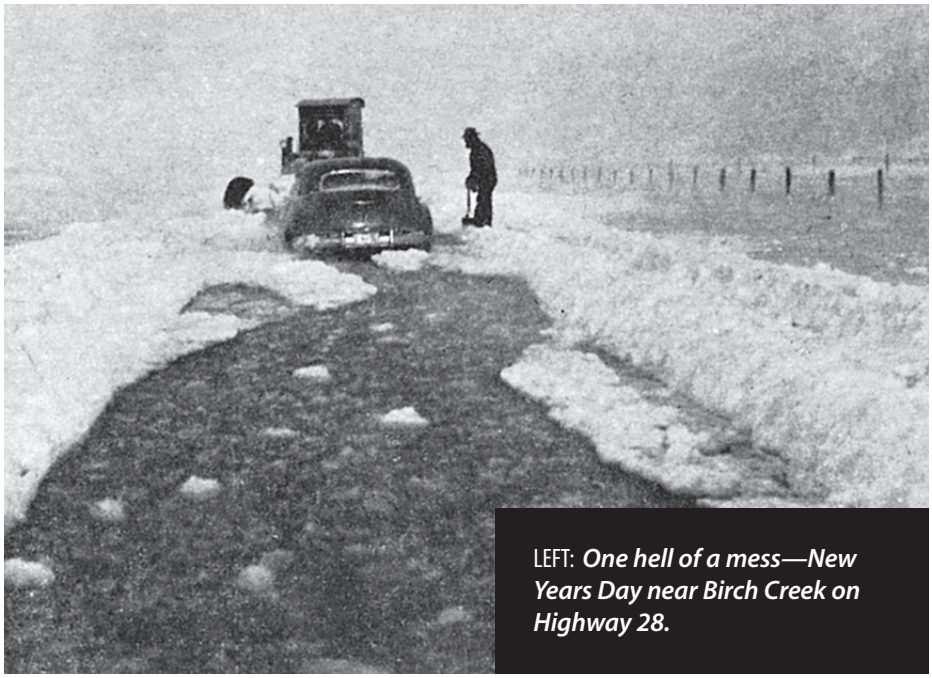

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL RYAN

LEFT: ***One hell of a mess—New Years Day near Birch Creek on Highway 28.***

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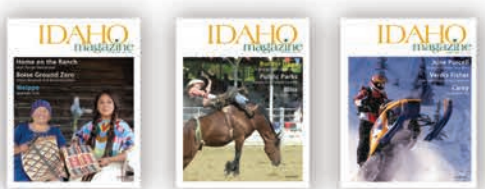

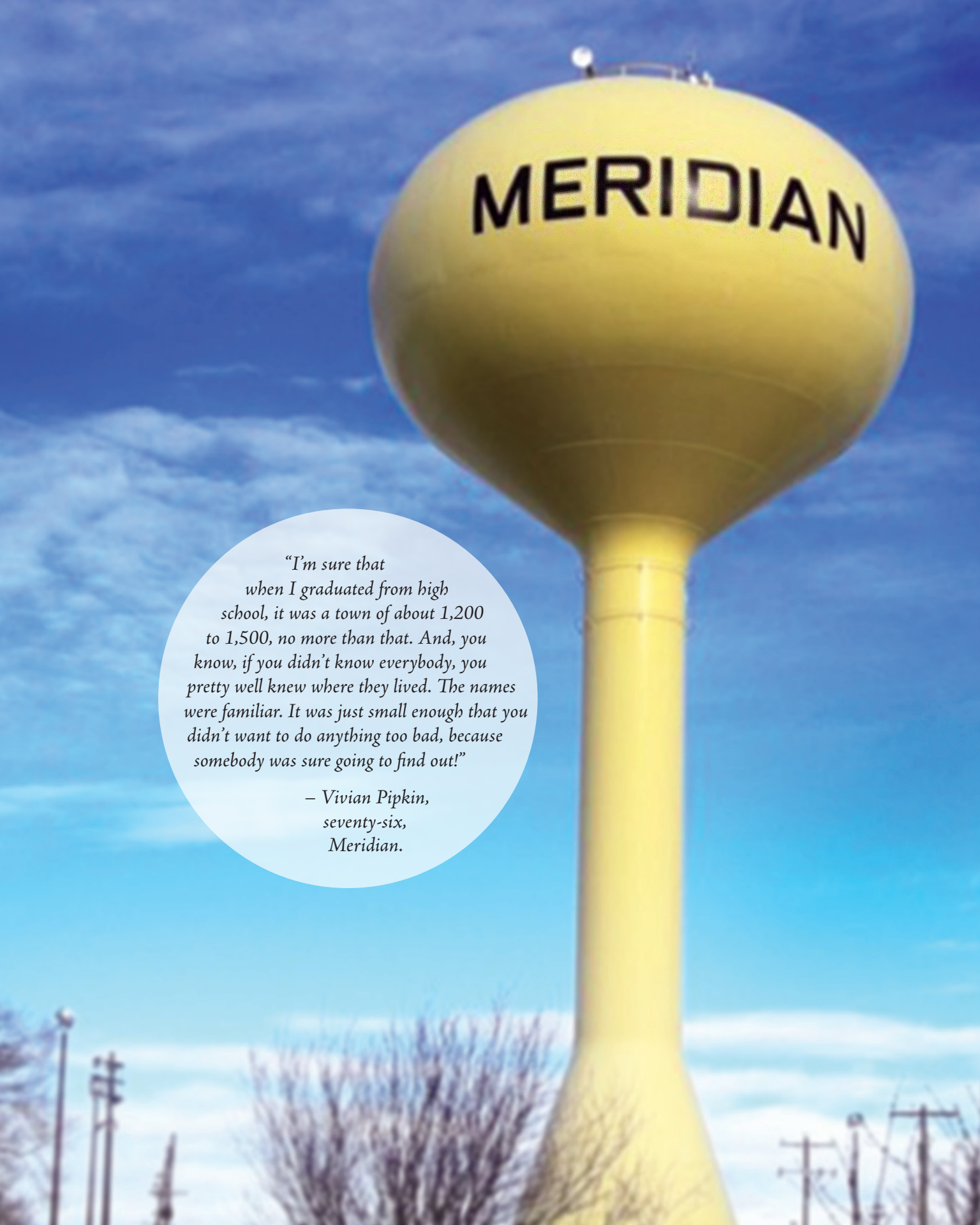

"I'm sure that when I graduated from high school, it was a town of about 1,200 to 1,500, no more than that. And, you know, if you didn't know everybody, you pretty well knew where they lived. The names were familiar. It was just small enough that you didn't want to do anything too bad, because somebody was sure going to find out!"

– Vivian Pipkin, seventy-six, Meridian.

Prime Meridian

Bedroom community blossoms, yet retains small-town feel

By Linda Funaiole

Meridian is a town on the move. No longer just a small, rural burg in the middle of the Treasure Valley, this city founded by Midwestern Methodists in the late1880s has shed its cocoon to take flight as the third largest and fastest-growing community in Idaho, with a population of almost 60,000 by last official count.

Known over the years for its tall, yellow water tower immortalized of late on lapel pins sold by the chamber of commerce for a dollar, and its annual Dairy Days celebration, engine-roaring speedway and once billowing creamery smokestack, Meridian has evolved into a major transportation corridor that connects two counties and has become a desirable destination for families and new businesses.

***Signpost for a city**—The water tower in downtown Meridian remains one of its most readily identifiable landmarks.*

PHOTO BY LINDA FUNAIOLE

PHOTO BY LINDA FUNAIOE

PHOTO BY LINDA FUNAIOE

LEFT: ***Welcome to town—Meridian gateway sign designed by local artist Bernie Jestrabek-Hart.***

ABOVE: ***The woman in charge—Mayor Tammy de Weerd.***

OPPOSITE: ***Gone, not forgotten—Ada County Dairymen's Association Creamery opened in 1929, closed 1970.***

Mayor Tammy de Weerd, an Idaho native and sixteen-year Meridian resident, was part of the city's first "tide of change," she says, adding, "When we moved here, Meridian was starting to grow and develop. It was still somewhat of a bedroom community of Boise. It was a lot different from what it is today. Certainly, the biggest and most significant change is that we've turned from a bedroom community into a full-service, self-reliant city, where our residents have all of the services, and they can live, work, and play here."

For de Weerd, who has seen Meridian's transformation from both sides of the fence—first as an involved private citizen and later as an elected official—the city's burgeoning park and open space systems that have doubled in size to include eleven parks are a crowning glory for a close-knit and active community.

"We've built a lot of unique and generational things on the backs of our volunteers. That's where you see the true grit and the big hearts of the people of Meridian—it's their willingness to serve, their willingness to roll up their sleeves and make it happen," she says.

Today's Meridian is a family-oriented community that has retained its small-town feel despite its growth spurt. While upscale planned communities and medical-technical industries have sprouted on the fringes of the city's ever-expanding map, the once bustling downtown core has not been forgotten and is poised for revival. This year, a new three-story, 90,000-square-foot city hall complex will open on the grounds of the old Meridian Creamery to provide a nucleus for townsfolk to celebrate the past and look forward to the future.

"Meridian's history was broad because of the water, the irrigation," de Weerd says. "It opened up all this land to agriculture and orchards and dairies, and we really thrived during those times. This plaza is in celebration of that. It will be a public gathering place that we hope the Arts Commission will bring to life. We hope to bring our farmer's market back into the heart of this community that hosted a very vibrant farmer's market in previous years. Those are all the things I look forward to."

She also eagerly anticipates a Ten Mile Road interchange that she says she has "lived and breathed" since taking office. Construction on the interchange could begin as early as July 2009 if funding is approved by the state Legislature. Added to the already-built overpasses at Locust Grove and Eagle roads and improvements at the corresponding intersections at Overland and Franklin roads, the new interchange will help ease congestion caused by the town's explosive expansion and through traffic from surrounding towns.

Phil Stiffler, Meridian economic excellence coordinator, says the future is bright for the city, which he calls "the new star of the West."

"The Boise Valley has been discovered and recognized nationally as a destination. Meridian, strategically located at the center of this metropolitan area, is transforming into a 21st Century city positioned for business success while providing a premier quality of life conducive to retaining a skilled and motivated workforce," he says.

To attract new businesses and help them succeed, the city has created, planned, and integrated business enterprise corridors that foster positive relationships and live up to the city's motto of "Built for Business… Designed for Living."

"Meridian values quality of life and a focus on family," Stiffler says. "Meridian is fulfilling the needs of families by maintaining a safe and caring community that provides quality education and an abundance of recreation and entertainment opportunities."

Shaun Wardle, Meridian Development Corporation administrator, views the town through dual lenses as a hometown boy and as a mover and shaker in downtown rejuvenation efforts. His earliest memories of are a community where everyone knew each other.

"The bakery ladies knew each of our names while handing out cookies in the grocery store. I even opened my first bank account with a sack-full of change. The shopping was limited. You couldn't even buy a pair of pants in Meridian," he says. "When I graduated from high school, there were only 9,000 people in the city (1993). Today, Meridian has really grown up, and shed its bedroom community stigma. There are great places to work and shop, along with a range of housing choices. It has been exciting to see the transition to a fully-sustainable place to live, work, and play."

Wardle reminisces about the annual fish derby during past Meridian Dairy Days, where a small pond was built in the parking lot of Cherry Plaza shopping center and stocked with hatchery trout.

"All the children waited in anticipation for the start, and when the bell sounded, it was pure pandemonium. Each child could catch and keep a fish, but only with their hands. Little ones got adult coaches. The secret was to bring a pair of long tube socks to wear on your hands, and to scout out the biggest fish that were lounging in the shade!"

Since those carefree childhood days, Wardle has matured into a successful businessman and city leader. Along with his family, he owns the valley's Idaho Athletic Clubs and heads Meridian's redevelopment arm charged with overseeing a revitalized Olde Towne center.

"Shopping, dining, and urban living -- all of these things are beginning to materialize," he says. "There are great projects on the horizon, and the com-

PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

munity really wants a place to identify with. As Meridian grows, a strong urban core is vital to creating a sense of place for our citizens.

"Meridian is the little community that could, and will. Through all the current growth and expansion, the city has thrived to keep a sense of place. One of my favorite thoughts is that even though Meridian may not be your hometown, it will be your children's. I really believe that concept resonates with newcomers to the community who want a great place to raise their families. Thankfully, there have been many great city leaders who contribute to that vision, and I'm sure they are proud to see the success of Meridian today."

Meridian Historical Society President and town historian Lila Hill is the city's best source of information about its heritage. Co-author with Glen W. Davidson of "They Came to Build a Community: A History of Meridian, Idaho" and "The People Called Methodists," she has a keen wit and razor-sharp memory when comes to such things as pioneers, the now defunct Interurban trolley, and other landmarks, people and moments in time in a town named for its center-point, or "meridian," in the state.

According to records she gathered for her book, Meridian's earliest settlers were mostly of the Methodist faith that arrived in waves predominately from southern and northern Missouri for readily available and inexpensive land on which to homestead and raise their families. They traveled cross-country on wagon trains to establish new lives in the unclaimed West. What they found was dry, dusty desert land dependent upon water. These initial settlers, along with native Americans, camped along Five Mile Creek and the Boise riverbanks.

"Emigrant trains had been coming west for many years by 1889, bringing with them all types of people who had different reasons in mind for making the great trek. Most of those who settled in the Meridian area came from farming backgrounds in the Midwest. Others came perhaps to make their fortunes in the mines of Idaho, to escape the law, or just to satisfy their curiosity to see what was out here. Their goals were different, but a new beginning was the vision they shared. This was the NEW 'promised land,'" she writes in her book.

In 1884, the U.S. Postal Service established a mail drop in the small outpost along the Union Pacific Railroad line, which was named Hunter after its superintendent.

"The train didn't stop. They just threw the bag off, and the man walked down the boardwalks or through the mud to get the mail. So, it was nothing but a mail drop. It never was a town," Hill says.

On August 17, 1893, the Odd Fellows organized a chapter and named its lodge "Meridian" in recognition of the principal surveyor's meridian, which is called Meridian Street as it passes through town, according to the Meridian Chamber of Commerce and Meridian Historical Society.

"The town plat was filed the following day by the husband of the woman who had the homestead rights to where Meridian is, east of Meridian Road. The homestead was in Eliza's name, but Christian Zenger came to town and filed it. It wasn't until she obtained her patent from the government that she could sell the land. The people who lived on the west side of Meridian Road—that forty acres belonged to the Wilburns," Hill explains, adding that the Zengers came from Utah, while the Wilburns traveled West from southern Missouri on the same wagon train as the Hudson and Rambow families, other early settlers.

The post office dropped the Hunter designation in 1894 and renamed its mail drop Meridian. "It didn't take long to work through that bureaucracy and get the name changed. It was named Meridian, because it lies on the meridian.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OPPOSITE: ***Meridian School 1904—Designed by Tourtellotte and Hummel, and built by Michel and Webber, the school held grades 1-12 until 1912. It stood until the early 1960s.***

TOP RIGHT: ***Bringing water to the fields—New York Canal, ca. 1912. Men and horses were used to construct framing for the concrete sides of the canal.***

RIGHT, LEFT TO RIGHT: ***The postman—Raymond "Shorty" Wolfe distributed the U.S. Mail for many years in the rural areas around Meridian. This picture was his 1925 Christmas card; On the job—McBirney Apple packing shed and crew.***

PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It's the principal measuring distance for all east and west divisions for land records in Idaho. It is the meridian. The initial point lies south of Kuna six miles. If you drive down the road to Kuna and look straight ahead you can see that little lava outcropping down ahead of you. It's the sight of many beer busts!" Hill says with a chuckle.

In 1903, eighty residents and taxpayers of the thriving farm trade center that had doubled its population to two hundred that year petitioned the board of county commissioners for incorporation as a village. Meridian was incorporated on Aug. 2, 1903.

The first school opened in town in 1885 along Five Mile Creek, and the first two churches were the Methodist Episcopal and the Methodist South, which split over loyalties to Abraham Lincoln. The Methodist South Church was built where the old Nazarene Church stands today on the corner of Pine and Main streets. In 1897, the Northern Methodists "pulled their church into town behind a team of horses on log skids and parked at the corner of East 3rd and Idaho streets," Hill says.

"The good Methodists, being good Methodists, ran back and forth according to which preacher they liked. They eventually merged again in 1917."

As part of their homestead claims, Meridian pioneers were required to provide water to their land within the five-year allotted timeframe. That requirement led to the establishment of the Settlers Ditch Company, which incorporated in 1884. Later that year, Arthur Foote came to Idaho to work with New York investors on the New York canal.

"They had to have it, because without the water there's nothing. So, the whole valley is dependent upon the Boise River. Period," Hill states emphatically.

With essential water now available for irrigation of crops, farmers began to grow apples, prunes, strawberries and other fruits, which they shipped from the five dehydrating and shipping sheds located along the railroad tracks. Once the Interurban trolley that connected Meridian with other valley towns rolled into town in 1908, farmers in the outlying areas loaded up their fruits for a cheap and quick haul to the main railroad line or their dairy products to the local creameries. The trolley station at that time was in the still-standing west third of today's Old Towne Library branch.

"We have ladings that show drugs being sent from doctors out to the county on the Interurban," Hill says. "We show them shipping eggs to town. We show them shipping fruits to town. We show them shipping milk to town. It was a major farm commodity conveyance."

By the early 1940s, the town's fruit industry dried up with the onset of refrigeration, and new businesses associated with the timber and housing industries sprung up. Dairy-related businesses

soon followed, thrusting the city into the state's dairy products limelight. The first creamery was built in 1897 on the site where the Wild West Bakery and Zamzow's mill sit today. The second creamery was built in 1928, burned down, was rebuilt and reopened in 1929. That creamery, with its signature "Challenge Butter" smokestack, came down a few years ago, earning Meridian a 2007 "onion" award for insensitivity to historic preservation from the Preservation Idaho group—an ill-deserved designation in Hill's opinion.

On most fair-weather weekends, the sounds of screeching tires and high-powered engines echo throughout Meridian as the city-owned speedway revs up with drag-racing fun. Initially developed as a ball field, the speedway was purchased through dedicated donations as a dairy show park and later leased to the town's athletic association as an income-producing venue for dairy show activities. It is now leased by private owners from the Dairy Show Board.

The water tower that hovers on the city's horizon provides pressurized water for city services. It replaced the original 1910 tower, built as part of the water works department, and since moved east of Cloverdale Road, near Desert Estates East, for rural fire protection.

The town's dairy roots are an integral part of its history and are celebrated each June during Meridian Dairy Days, which have been observed in one form or another since 1929.

Longtime Meridian residents Burl and Vivian Pipkin, eighty-three and seventy-six, remember the days when her father ran a milk delivery route with five trucks in the summer and four in the winter, hauling about 12,000 pounds of milk a day in ten-gallon cans on a route that ran from Locust Grove Road to one mile west of the Sugar Beet Factory, south to Franklin Road and north to the Boise River. A Nampa native, Burl married Vivian after World War II and earned his way through college by working on one of her father's milk routes.

Vivian, who has lived in Meridian off and on since she was three, remembers Pine Street when it was gravel and running out into the streets in night-clothes along with neighbors when the fire whistle blew.

"I'm sure that when I graduated from high school, it was a town of about 1,200 to 1,500, no more than that. And, you know, if you didn't know everybody, you pretty well knew where they lived. The names were familiar. It was just small enough that you didn't want to do anything too bad, because somebody was sure going to find out!"

Burl reminisces about the town's basketball rivalry with Nampa and Emmett, the days when Don Storey was mayor, and when the city got a swimming pool, a park and a speedway.

The city's recent escalation in growth is no cause for alarm for these longtime residents who value well-managed progress.

"I still love my town. While a lot of people feel like growth is bad, I go back to Iowa sometimes to visit a cousin where maybe, maybe there's one house a year built, and I come home and I think, 'Oh, my goodness, I'm glad we live where we do, where things look like they are thriving. It's a good place to live still," Vivian says. ■

References:

- *"They Came To Build A Community: A History of Meridian, Idaho and The People Called Methodists," by Lila Hill and Glen W. Davidson, Copyright©1986, Trustees of the First United Methodist Church."*
- *Meridian Historical Society*
- *Meridian Chamber of Commerce*

PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LEFT: ***Early downtown—Meridian, ca. 1918. The Modern Woodmen of America building 1902, located to the right of the water tower, was built at the corner of East First St. and Idaho, is now known as The Heritage Building.***

OPPOSITE: ***We have a winner!—Meridian Speedway 1968, Bob Broadwater, flagman.***

Meridian

Attractions

- Meridian Speedway Racetrack
- Roaring Springs Water Park
- Boondocks Fun Center and Arcade
- Lakeview Golf Course
- Meridian Symphony
- New Heritage Theatre Company
- Majestic Theater

Calendar of Events

MAR	1–Meridian Symphony, Meridian Middle School
	8–Crimestoppers Celebrity Volleyball, Sawtooth Jr. High
APR	24–Mayor's Breakfast, Homecourt YMCA
	tba–Optimist Club Easter Egg Hunt
	tba–American Legion Post 113 Oyster & Fish Fry
MAY	6–Chamber Small Business Awards
	tba–Chamber Golf Tournament
JUN	17-21–Dairy Days Celebration
	18-21–Carnival, Cattle Show, Petting Zoo
	19–Pancake Feed
	19-20–Meridian Marketplace, Storey Park
	20–"Real" Dairy Days Parade, Downtown
AUG	5–National Night Out
	tba–Firemen's Salmon Barbecue
SEP	tba–Lions Club Rodeo
OCT	tba–Scarecrow & Harvest Festival
	tba–Chili Cookoff
NOV	tba–Meridian Wreath Festival
	tba–Turkey Drive
DEC	6–Winterland Parade, Downtown

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PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS

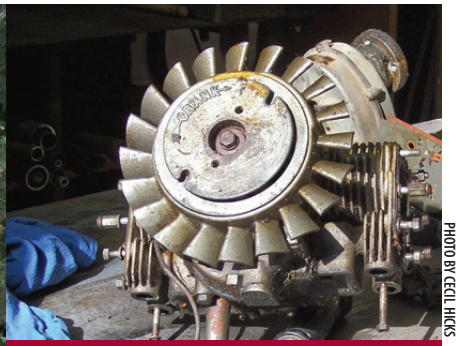

PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS

LEFT: *VIntage machines in a row—Dennis Hamann stands with his restored farm tractors.*

ABOVE: *Work in progress—A one lung, hit and miss engine in pieces.*

RIGHT: *A garden tractor—Hamann's "D-1/8," the "Rough Rider."*

Idaho Retiree Takes Pride in Restoring Tractors and Engines

By Cecil Hicks

Dennis Hamann of Sandpoint began buying and repairing ranch and farm equipment out of necessity. As a part-time cattle rancher, he just couldn't afford to buy new machinery, or pay for the high mechanical repair costs. Instead, he opted to buy older, affordable equipment and keep it running himself.

He considers himself an endangered species, someone born, raised, and resident nearly all of his life (except for a few years spent in the Navy) in the Gem State. Although he grew up on his parents' farm in the Panhandle country of north Idaho with two older brothers and a sister, he doesn't claim to be a natural mechanic who has worked on engines his whole life. He did, however, do a lot of family chores, including harvesting vegetables from their huge family garden, milking cows, and caring for the hogs and chickens. He also worked for the neighbors, driving tractors for plowing, disking, and planting fields. During the summers as a teenager, he also bucked a lot of hay bales.

After graduating from high school in 1958, he joined the Navy. When he got out of the service in 1962, he returned home and started working at a local stud mill. At this time, he also purchased thirty-three acres of land from his parents and, in 1973, he began raising registered Polled Hereford cattle part-time on his pasture land. Over the years, he built up his herd to more than one hundred head, and leased more than four hundred acres of hay fields and pasture. When cattle prices dropped from about one dollar a pound to

around fifty-five cents in 1997, he sold his herd and stopped ranching.

From 1965 to 2000, he worked for Bonner General Hospital, serving as the hospital's director of Building Services. He also supervised various construction projects during his tenure, including the new west wing and an MRI equipment room. He retired in 2000 after thirty-three years at the hospital.

Hamann has been married twice, and has three daughters from his first marriage and three boys and two girls with his second wife, Teresa.

When he began repairing and restoring his own farm equipment, he realized very quickly that he enjoyed the process. Eventually, he built a thirty-five by forty-five foot metal-sided heated machine shop on his property so he could indulge his passion year around. This shop serves as his sanctuary and as a meeting place for friends and co-members of the local Panhandle Antique Tractor and Engine Club.

Over the years, he has spent thousands of hours rebuilding tractors and engines in his shop. His tally of projects to this point includes ten restored tractors, several hay swathers, hay balers, and wagons, as well as numer-

PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS

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ous small engines. He has kept three of the restored tractors: an Allis-Chalmers 1947c, a 1950 Ford 8N, and a 1934 Farmall F12, the last of which he co-owns with a nephew. Hamann displays his work at the local county fair, and drives the machines during tractor rallies and enters them in the annual Fourth of July parade.

As you tour through Hamann's shop and the surrounding area outside, he'll point out various different engines waiting for his future attention. As he does, he describes the story behind them. Under a black polyethelene tarp alongside a nearby pole shed lurk three vintage engines awaiting his attention. Two of these are Fairbank-Morris motors owned by a fellow member of the engine club who plans to give Hamann one of them in return for restoring both.

Depending upon the condition of the engines, he admits that he sometimes has to cannibalize several non-working engines to rebuild one that functions. An example of that occurred when he had three vintage upright one-lung hit-and-miss engines once used for shearing sheep in southern Idaho. He combined usable parts from all three derelicts to create one working engine.

Under an overhanging evergreen tree behind his shop sits a six hundred fifty pound, six horsepower, Vaughan Flex-tread walk-behind garden tractor, which he refitted with a riding seat. Attachments for this beast include a plow, disk, harrow, and cultivator. The tractor was given to him by an uncle more than thirty years ago, and he is

PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS

PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS

ABOVE: ***Engines in the works—Two Fairbanks-Morris and a Galloway wait for Hamann's attention.***

LEFT: ***Stripped down—An Allis-Chalmers tractor being restored.***

OPPOSITE: ***In a row—Hamann's restored farm machinery, near his shop.***

finally planning to rebuild it, moving it up a slot or two on his winter "To Do" list. He calls the tractor his D 1/8 (in reference to a D8 Bulldozer) and has nicknamed it the "Rough Rider." Laughing, Hamann said, "If you've ever ridden one, you'll know what I mean."

His main project last winter was a 1946 Allis-Chalmers tractor. This year is a bit more up in the air, but he always has several projects brewing. One was a Ferro Special 1910 three horsepower, one-cylinder engine once used on commercial fishing boats on north Idaho's largest lake, Lake Pend Orielle.

A back shop table held a Fairmont five-horse engine once used on a railway scooter used to haul railway workers and repair equipment down the line. He pointed out that the engine was reversible, noting the usefulness of a feature that allowed crews to back-up if, say, they observed an approaching train on the same track.

As he unscrewed the radiator cap of the old Fairmont engine block, he explained that his first task was to clean out the mouse nest. "I don't know how the mice did it, but they clogged up the water jacket and the entire radiator."

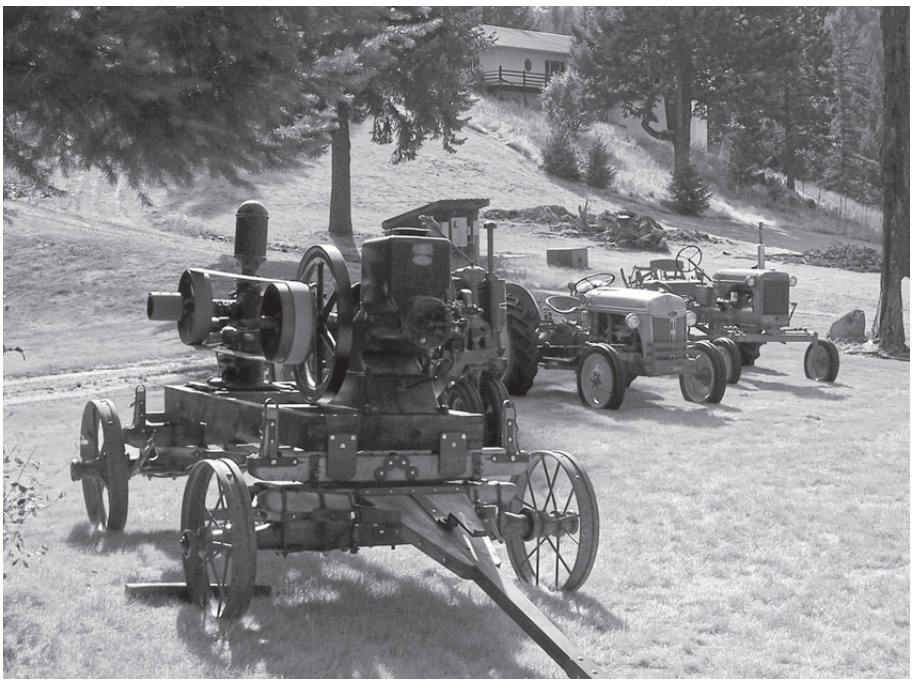
With so many rebuilding engine and tractor projects to work on, Hamann admits he sometimes has to "back off from one I'm having problems with, or [one I'm] starting to get bored with as it's taking too much time to restore. I can go to work on something else and always come back later."

During a recent Bonner County Fair, he displayed several of his restored tractors and engines. To get the farm machinery to the fair, he fired up his rebuilt 190 Ford F4 one-and-a-half-ton truck, hooked it to a trailer, and hauled two tractors and a 1920 vintage iron-wheeled wagon that took him three hundred eighty hours to rebuild. Riding atop the wagon were a 1920 Mitchel four-horse hit-and-miss engine and a 1902 Gould water pump.

Hamann said that the water pump had been used by a neighboring farmer for irrigation. Every Saturday morning, he'd fire it up, pump water from a slough, and fill a gravity-flow holding tank above his shop. "You could hear the pump for miles around the neighborhood, it was so loud," said Hamann.

He keeps track of the time he has spent restoring his machines. He said that the Ford F4 took twenty-two hundred hours of work. It had been used in southern Idaho to haul sugar beets, and the bed had retractable rods that allowed for dumping a load to either side of the truck.

Hamann does not rebuild his vintage tractors and engines for money, nor does he dwell on the thousands of dollars he has spent on old iron over the years. Instead, he views it as an enthusiastic hobby that is both a lifestyle and labor of love. He enjoys learning the story and history behind each of his vintage farm machines. "I'm definitely not getting rich restoring farm machinery. I just enjoy the rebuilding process. When I'm finished, I like looking at them and taking pride in bringing the old tractors and engines back to life." ■



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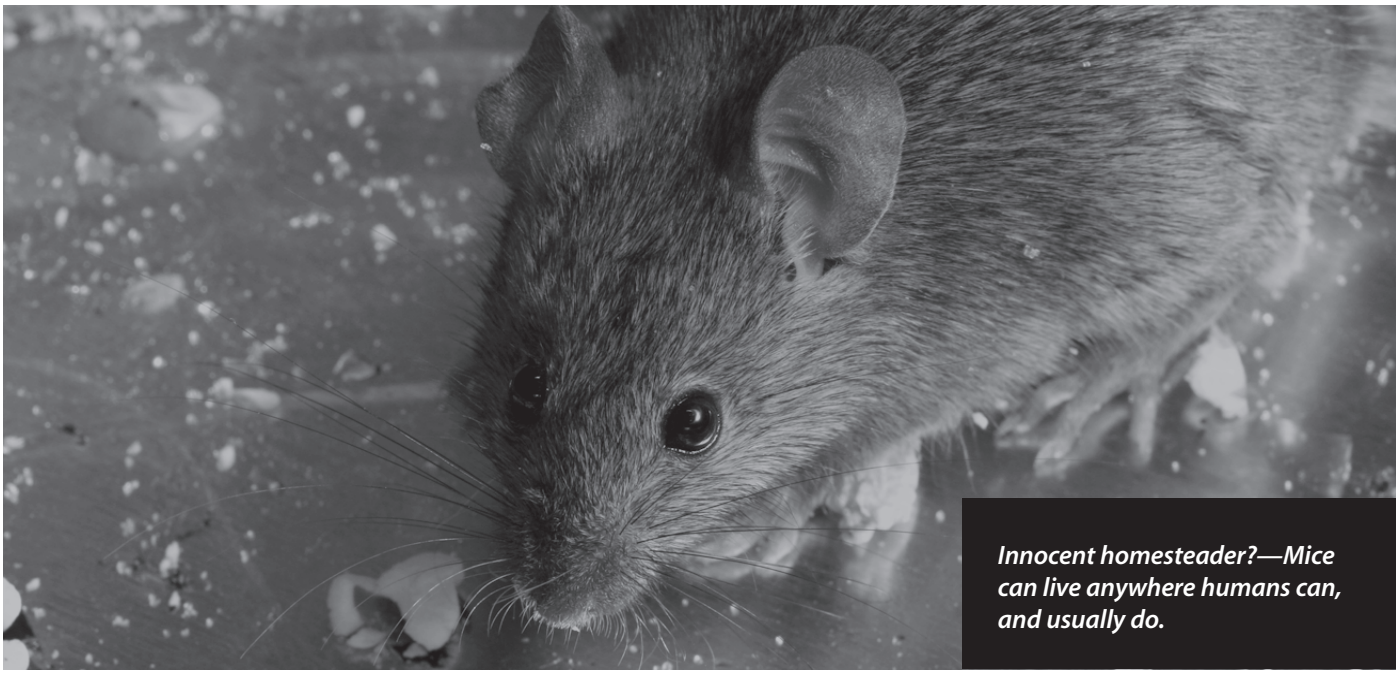

PHOTO BY DAWN M. TURNER

Innocent homesteader?—Mice can live anywhere humans can, and usually do.

A Pretty Good Bargain

By Dallin C. Moon

Recently, my father bought a brand new car—one small step for most men, one giant leap for my father. You see, over the years my father has developed a sharp eye for a good bargain. Most people call this good habit, sound reason, or common sense; however, I know my father has never had any of these things, especially when it comes to buying automobiles.

"Is your husband all right?" the salesman asked my mother as they were going through the final documents. "I've never seen a man act this way before."

"Oh," my mother calmly replied, "you'd have to understand my husband. He has never bought a brand new car, and he just doesn't know if he's getting a good bargain." The salesman assured her they were, and they both looked at my father on the opposite side of the room, head in hands, acting as though he had turned his back on everything he held dear.

My father's obsession with a good bargain goes much deeper than finances. For him, it's about principle. "I never had brand new things when I was a kid," he would often tell me. "We need to appreciate what we got and what we can do for ourselves."

Of course, I always felt he took this principle too far. For example, even though he earns a pharmacist's wage, and despite the modern invention of lube shops, my father will still wedge himself under a car and change the oil himself. Or, if temperatures have reached subzero levels, sometimes he will wedge me under the car. To this day, my father admits his children are the greatest bargain he ever made.

So naturally, I was completely baffled when mother told me the news, "We bought a new car," she said, "a brand new car!"

This was so unlike my father that I couldn't help but laugh in disbelief, especially as I considered the automobiles we have owned throughout the years. The first vehicle I consciously remember was a 1981 Chevrolet Suburban. Due to its antiquity and magnitude, my poor

mother was commonly known in the neighborhood as The Wagon Master. She tolerated her husband's need for a bargain, but at the turn of the century, she was a little embarrassed.

"The paint is flaking off, the timing belt squeals, the muffler backfires, and the radio is stuck on AM," my mother said. "I know we're not people of high status, but don't you think after driving that hunk-o-junk for twenty years, it's time to consider a new car?"

My father considered buying a new car for a couple years. In fact, the only reason he got rid of it was because the AM radio finally went out, right about the same time the engine stopped. When the Suburban gasped its last breath of fuel-air mixture, he was ready for another deal.

The next car was a monumental event for our family. For several months my father had been scrutinizing the automobile market, learning everything from Model T to the 350Z and every other model in the alphabet. With all this information stuck in his mind, clogging his mental pipes of good judgment, my father decided on a much newer car than the previous—a 1985 SUV.

To him, it seemed like a logical choice. With the kids gone, they no longer needed the Suburban's back seat. Plus, he was buying this particular vehicle from a friend he could trust—Old Pete.

"This is a very logical choice," my father explained. "The kids are gone, so we don't need the back seat. Plus, I bought it from a good friend, Old Pete."

"Pete had his license revoked ten years ago for being legally blind," my mother responded with a hint of concern in her voice. "Isn't he about ninety-three years old now? That car has been sitting in front of his house for all these years."

"I know," Pa said. "That's why it's such a bargain. Besides, it has very low miles on it for a 1985. There's only one small thing that I need to take care of."

"One small thing," my mother said, emphasizing the word "small" as if it were a relative term for my father. "It's nothing to worry about," Pa reassured. "It's just that during these past ten years, a mouse or two may have climbed under the floorboards."

Most women would have jumped at the word "mouse" and grabbed onto something, most likely their husband's neck. However, my mother kept her cool, the same cool that has kept their marriage alive over the years.

...it's such a bargain. Besides it has very low miles...There's only one small thing that I need to take care of."

"Don't lose your cool, honey," Pa remarked. "I'll take it to a professional, and they can have it looking as good as new for a few bucks."

So that's exactly what my father did. He told the detailers about this "small thing," and they started working on it immediately. However, as my mom suspected, that small mouse-sized condition was actually a giant rat-sized problem. Upon intensive investigation, the detailers called my father to tell him the bad news.

Apparently, during those ten years that the car had remained in front of Old Pete's house, an entire mouse kingdom had flourished. The rodent scavengers had infiltrated every vent, settled every bucket seat, colonized the dashboard, laid claim to the floorboards, taken over the trunk, conquered the radio, and plundered the electrical system.

Every half hour or so, the detailers would call, and based upon their new discoveries, charge my father an upcharge of $200, $400, $600, $800, $1000. In the end, the bargain vehicle my father purchased from Old Pete for $1,500 ended up costing an additional $2,000 in maintenance and reparation.

When I heard the story, I knew what this meant for my father. And I felt sorry for him. Just like that, my father had lost his reputation for finding a good bargain. Instantly, the story spread throughout the community like, well, mice in an SUV. So with no status or rank to uphold, he surrendered and bought a brand new car.

Now, if there is one thing to learn from my father's automobile history, it would be: don't let your passion and persistence leave you stubborn and foolish; it might cost you more in the end. That being said, hopefully you can take the experiences and follies of my father and apply them to your own life. Observation is one of life's greatest teachers, and this one comes free. And if you ask me, that's a pretty good bargain. ■

PHOTO BY LARAE

One way to fish—Plant the pole, read a book, and hope the fish don't bite.

Not a Fisherman

By Dene Oneida

For those who are unaware of my background, I was born and raised here in Idaho. I have spent many, many days in the backcountry, hiking, canoeing, and camping, and I have bored endless people over the years with tales of this thing or that seen here or there. Given that, I suppose I ought to confess that I have long grown out of the necessity to commune with nature. In fact, for many years now, "roughing it" has largely consisted of sleeping in a hotel with no room service. Or going through a day without a shower.

This is not to say that I cannot take care of myself in the wild; I still believe that I can, within limits. But I like indoor plumbing. I like heat that comes up when I turn a dial. And I like cooking on a stove instead of a campfire.

None of this is too unusual. I have no doubt that I could find natives all across the state who have little desire to spend time in the Great Outdoors. But I suspect that few indeed would join me in admitting this ultimate blasphemy:

I don't like fishing.

It isn't the chill of the early morning, the somnambulant car trips, the cold water, the wet grass, the dank mud, or the mossy, slippery rocks that bother me particularly. It isn't the nastiness of spearing earthworms or bugs for bait. It isn't the fact that one can stand, for hours, alongside a stream with no result whatsoever save increasingly cold feet and ears. It isn't the slimy feel of the fish once caught or the fact that the line gets snared on everything under the sun at first opportunity. It isn't the fact that unhooking a fish from a barbed hook is a small measure of awful, and it isn't, necessarily, the fact that when you catch fish of whatever variety, you have to clean them. Been there, done that. Nor is it the fact that I really don't like the taste of fish, and it doesn't matter a whit if it is grilled, stir-fried, or roasted on a flat rock.

No, the problem is that fishing combines all of these things, and usually in a way best calculated to make me stay indoors afterwards for months at a time.

It wasn't always this way. When I was young, my dad would periodically toss the gear in the back of the station wagon and set off for one stream or another to catch trout, and we kids would simply have to deal with the things about fishing that none of us particularly enjoyed. So while Dad would stalk upstream in his waders carrying his creel and pole, we would settle in at one place or another, each with a pole of our own, attempting to catch something and usually failing.

I used to take a book along, and I could usually be found with my pole propped up and my line in the water, sitting with my back against a tree in a patch of

sunshine. I would read for hours, enjoying the day largely untroubled by actual fish on the line since I usually didn't bait the hook. And when I did, the fish would generally nibble it off. In the few instances when they insisted upon being caught, I would oblige by disengaging them from my line and gill-hooking them on a chain. Then, I would put them back into the water and resettle my pole for continued indolence. At the end of the day (or whenever we stopped), I'd wind in my line, grab my catch (if I had any), and head back to the car. Once there, we all would clean the catch, put it on ice, and drive home.

As I already pointed out, cleaning the catch was never my favorite thing in the world, but I figured if I caught it, I could clean it. The same rules applied to pheasant, which is the only creature I ever successfully hunted (not that I did much of that, either). Of course, I liked pheasant, which muddies the issue a bit, but well.

Obviously, none of the foregoing describes a young man with an itch to fish. I didn't care particularly either way, but, at that time, fishing struck me as a nice reason to sit and spend the day reading beside a stream, since I was going to be there regardless.

That evaluation changed when I was around twelve. I recall our family going along on an outing with our next-door neighbors, the McBigGuys (name changed for reasons which will become clear). We all caravanned north to a place where a stream widened out into a pond, and the pond emptied into a larger stream. I couldn't tell you where that happened now if hooked up to a lie detector…or a car battery. It was a pond.

Old Man McBigGuy and my dad were wearing waders and working their way around the circumference of the pond. Both were catching fish, but it wasn't a quick process. I was sitting on the shore, mostly reading but also getting up and helping periodically.

When my dad caught a fish, he would hook it to a gill chain or drop it in his creel, depending on size. Old Man McBigGuy was releasing the smaller fish he was catching and keeping the larger ones. He came out of the water a couple of times, quickly gutting his catch and putting them on ice. He would grab a beer (or two) then go back to fishing.

I hadn't been terribly busy for some time when Mr. McBigGuy caught a large trout. The fish was obviously a keeper, and after he unhooked the struggling fish, he unsheathed his knife and quickly gutted it, tossing its entrails downstream. He called to me to come and get it, so I drifted over to the edge of the pond.

I had watched him whoop as he caught it, and I had watched him clean the poor thing a scant couple of seconds after freeing it from the hook. The trout was dead in my mind and ready for ice.

I took it by the jaw using my forefinger as a hook and started to ease back ashore. This was the point where the fish began flipping gutlessly back and forth.

I freaked and threw the thing far out over the pond, where it splashed harmlessly into the water. I stood there, shaking with surprise, eyes widened to the approximate size of dinner plates.

Old Man McBigGuy was not a happy fisherman. First, he yelled at me about losing his catch. Then, he questioned my relative intelligence. It was this point where my dad pointed out that it was just a fish, I was just a kid, and that Old Man McBigGuy had been drinking and maybe he wanted to re-think the whole yelling thing.

He stopped yelling. Instead, he decided that making fun of the kid with the glasses and the books was a great deal more enjoyable under the circumstances, and he began to dwell on boozy stories of scary ghost fishies.

This wouldn't have been so bad, once. I did throw the fish, and it had been a big one. The situation got very old very quickly when the taunting continued after returning to Pocatello. It stayed old when, periodically, Old Man BigGuy "humorously" re-examined the issue over the next several years.

As William Faulkner noted: "The past isn't dead. It isn't even past."

I concluded shortly after the incident that fishing was no great loss to me one way or another, given all of the stuff about it that I didn't like already (getting up early, the cold, the damp, the icky bait, etc.), and I refused to give Old Man McBigGuy any further reason to give me a bunch of garbage about the subject. I wasn't allowed to tell him off, so I simply avoided him, and fishing, to the extent I could. Several years later, the booze and fatty food caught up with him, and that was that. I finished growing up, went into the service, went to college, got married and started a family, and never, in all that time, was I ever remotely interested in dipping a line in a stream.

I'm still not interested in fishing, but, somehow, the idea of reading alongside a stream, sitting with my back against a tree in the sunshine, sounds more and more appealing as the years go by. ■

Police Academy – Idaho Style

PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA

PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA

Surviving P.O.S.T.

By Jana Kemp

Some people go on cruises or return to school seeking a degree. Others start a business to enjoy their lives and apply their creativity to life. Still others amass things into a collection. In 2002, nearly twenty years after nearly pursuing a military career, I chose to go to the Idaho Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) Academy in order to learn more about law enforcement and to stretch my own skill-sets and abilities. Many people questioned "Why the police academy?" At thirty-seven years of age, my response was "this is as close to boot-camp as I'll ever get and because I considered military service as I left high school, why not?"

Before being allowed into the POST Academy, you must either already by hired by an Idaho law enforcement agency or determine to self-sponsor, which is what I did. And while one

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: ***Welcome —Main entrance to the Academy; Out on traffic simulation—Meridian water tower in background; Detention simulation—Jail cells make training look real; Near the administration building—A wooden badge sign.***

OPPOSITE: ***The author at center—With her 2002 POST graduating class.***

PHOTO CREDIT

police department did try to recruit me, I stayed true to my own course: learning. My goal was to learn more about law enforcement so that I could more actively pursue civilian contracts with law enforcement. With either approach to entering the academy, each person must complete an exhausting battery of items and tests. First is the application itself, which asks why you want to enter law enforcement. The application was followed by intelligence tests and a psychological interview. Background checks and a polygraph interview are conducted. Along the way, I kept thinking "maybe something will throw me out." On the medical front: your doctor must give approval for participation in the rigor of the course—thank goodness I've always enjoyed good health. A hearing exam is required as well; I wasn't aware of any shortcomings in that regard and it turned out I had none. There is also a vision requirement; I wear contacts and passed. Rounding out the initial requirements is a physical fitness test.

With only an average level of fitness, I knew I had a lot of work to do on this front, especially to rapidly increase my upper body strength, to run one-and-a-half miles in under seventeen minutes and seventeen seconds, and complete a variety of other tasks. All of the other entry requirements posed no threat or challenge to my entering the academy. So, in order to prepare for the physical fitness test I drove to measure out a one-and-a-half mile course so that I could begin running it daily. I also marked the garage wall so that I could improve my vertical jump abilities. Sit-ups are a fairly good skill for me (sure wish I could remember my scores). However, there were those push-ups. No, not Demi Moore style push-ups as were seen in G.I. Jane (one-arm behind the back and two feet on the floor). POST push-ups are toes and hands on the floor with your chest near the floor on each descent. Push-ups remained my weakness right through the end of the academy, even though I improved my total count by seventeen push-ups by the end (giving me twenty-seven, with twenty-one being required).

Having passed the entry requirements and being admitted, I moved into the POST Academy along with nearly fifty others for our ten weeks of training. The Meridian-based academy has dormitory sleeping rooms, two to a room, and a full-service cafeteria.


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA


PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA

TOP: ***Listening attentively—Classroom study is a significant part of the POST curriculum.***

ABOVE MIDDLE, LEFT TO RIGHT: ***Living at POST—Students stay at the Academy in this dorm, two to a room; Spartan amenities—Dorm rooms contain two beds, two closets, two desks, a bathroom, a vanity, and little else.***

ABOVE BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: ***Recreation and rescue—The car can be lowered into the pool to simulate rescue situations; Cleaning their weapons—Students learn to dismantle and meticulously wipe down the guns and rifles they use on the job.***

While the accommodations are spare, I certainly enjoyed not having to make meals three times a day. Students came from around the state: four of us were women, the rest men; and we ranged in age from twenty-two to fifty, as I recall. My roommate had already been hired by the Idaho State Police and was a source of inspiration and motivation, especially on the physical education front, as it turned out she was also a fitness instructor.

Daily class time at POST begins with physical training at 6:00 in the morning, followed by an hour to get ready and eat breakfast. Classroom time begins at 8:00 and runs until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. depending on the day. In the evenings, we sometimes spent time in class learning how to use pepper spray; practice handcuffing and with pressure points; building searches; and practice scenarios. Evenings were always full of study and homework assignments with lights out at 10:30 p.m. Class topics included: first aid, understanding gangs, drug recognition, driving, shooting, fingerprinting, crime scene handling, domestic abuse, child abuse, weapon care and retention, scenario practices, brand inspection, the Alcohol Beverage Control division, and more. An entire week and a dedicated test are focused on understanding Idaho's laws as they relate to the most commonly occurring infractions of the law that officers are likely to be addressing.

A marksmanship pre-qualification is not a part of entrance to the academy. I grew up in a house that didn't have guns, real or toy, and my family never even discussed guns. As a result, the shooting qualifications, one with a handgun and one with a rifle, were the most challenging tests for me to pass during the academy. On the handgun course, you have three opportunities to score eighty-five or better out of one hundred points. On the first day of shooting, everything was new to me: I scored in the low seventies. The instructors were very helpful with suggestions such as: "pull the trigger smoothly," "focus on the target," and "don't release past the trigger click, you'll be able to fire more quickly and smoothly." Truth be told, it took me a full year of periodic shooting before I actually could "feel the trigger click." At the end of the first day of shooting, I was physically and mentally exhausted: so much to learn and only two more opportunities to succeed.

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SAFETY GROWTH CONTROL

On Day Two of the shooting range qualification time, I think a miracle happened, an opinion shared by several of the range instructors. Overnight, I focused on all of the suggestions I'd been given and I did some serious praying too that I'd be able to qualify on the second day and not have to be under pressure on the last-chance third day to qualify. And visualized practice is all you've got between class days because weapons are locked up when they are not in use at the range, as they rightly should be. That second day I scored eighty-seven and passed. Many of my classmates were shooting scores in the nineties and several were shooting full one hundreds. Nonetheless, I was very pleased to have passed and to be able to stay in the academy to its completion.

PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA

PHOTO BY DENE ONEIDA

FAR LEFT: ***Memorial—A remembrance of officers who died on duty.***

LEFT: ***Not just words—Every day, teachers and students work to fulfill this promise to the people of Idaho.***

I also grew up in a very modest household, so when it came to learning how to handcuff, body-search, and properly lead a suspect to a patrol car, my personal-space bubble was collapsed. When an officer needs to make an arrest, it is a very up close and personal interaction that requires attention, skill, and thoroughness, because both the suspect's and the officer's lives may be at stake. During the multi-week practice sessions in preparation for passing the handcuffing tests, and with only four of us women in the class, I found myself saying "practice, this may save an officer's life someday." Handcuffs are tools that require care and attention in order to work efficiently. Television shows and movies don't begin to portray the level of difficulty involved in successfully handcuffing someone.

From the first week of the academy, survival is stressed. Officers need to survive their challenges in the line of duty, including being shot themselves. One of the exercises around surviving forced us to "find what it is that you will live for if you are down." We saw videos, we heard stories, we learned specific skills, and we talked amongst ourselves about just what can keep a person focused on staying alive, even when the odds are against you. At this juncture in my life, I was single, childless, pet-less, supporting a struggling business, and could only claim plants that needed watering once a week as my dependents. Classmates were encouraging as they all realized that they had lots of "inspire myself to keep me alive" memories to draw upon and reasons to keep themselves alive. I finally found my inspiration: my sense of justice and that "while you may have hurt me, I don't intend to let you hurt others." In fact, I've reflected on this class emphasis many times since my classmate, Idaho State Trooper Chris Glenn, was shot and paralyzed in the line of duty during a stop in December of 2006. Trooper Glenn is with his family, and I'm certain that his training, dedication, and will to live all worked together to keep him alive.

Among the difficult classes was the day we spent learning about child abuse and seeing pictures of what the abuse can look like when an officer arrives on the scene. At the beginning of the picture-supported storytelling, I literally found myself sitting with my hand over my eyes, not wanting to look at the images. Finally I said to myself: "if you were an officer you'd have to look at this, so deal with it." And it was not pleasant to see and hear what human beings are capable of doing to children. In fact, during our breaks that day, I recall many of the male officers talking to each other and saying "if you ever need help in your jurisdiction to lock up a child abuser, just let me know." All of us were dramatically affected and angered by what we witnessed. Five years later, helping a friend read through police reports regarding a very young child's safety, flashbacks from this class and many of the family abuse related

classes came flooding forth.

A story from the POST weeks that I share during some of my workshops about managing time and making decisions has to do with making choices. At the end of the emotionally draining week addressing child and family abuse issues, we had two days of weapon retention practice. Learning to keep your gun in your holster and in your possession was the focus and the drill and practice. It was exhausting. Many of us had bruises up and down both arms, elbow to hand, as a result of the intensity of this practice. One of the final practices was set up thus: "the bad guy has your gun. The gun is pointed at the back of your head and you are down on your knees with your hands up by your ears. Now, what are you going to do?" During the silence that followed the question, some of us thought "what can I do?" while others began machining to solve the problem. The bottom line of the practice and the lesson: "Even with your own gun in the hands of a bad guy, you have a choice." This has turned out to be one of the most powerful experiences of the academy.

Thankfully, only three times during the ten weeks did I seriously question why I was doing this, pushing myself so hard, without pay; managing my ten-year-old business on breaks, during evening hours, and on weekends; and learning to drive, to shoot, and workout like I'd never done before. The schedule and intensity of each day amounted to a weekly tiredness factor that comes somewhat or maybe half-way close to surviving military boot camp. And each time I questioned myself, my resolve to finish remained: "I'm not a quitter." Serving in law enforcement requires a variety of skills, tolerances, and knowledge-sets. It also requires a special personality dedicated to serving the community, stomaching horrific scenes, problem solving with both calm and angry citizens, and perseverance in the face of any challenge. The POST experience is among my life's achievements because I achieved physical skill tests that I had not before completed, and because my first-hand understanding of what it takes to become a police officer has been a part of nearly every day's experience since then.

For more information about a career in law enforcement in Idaho, visit the Idaho POST Academy site: www.idaho-post.org. ■

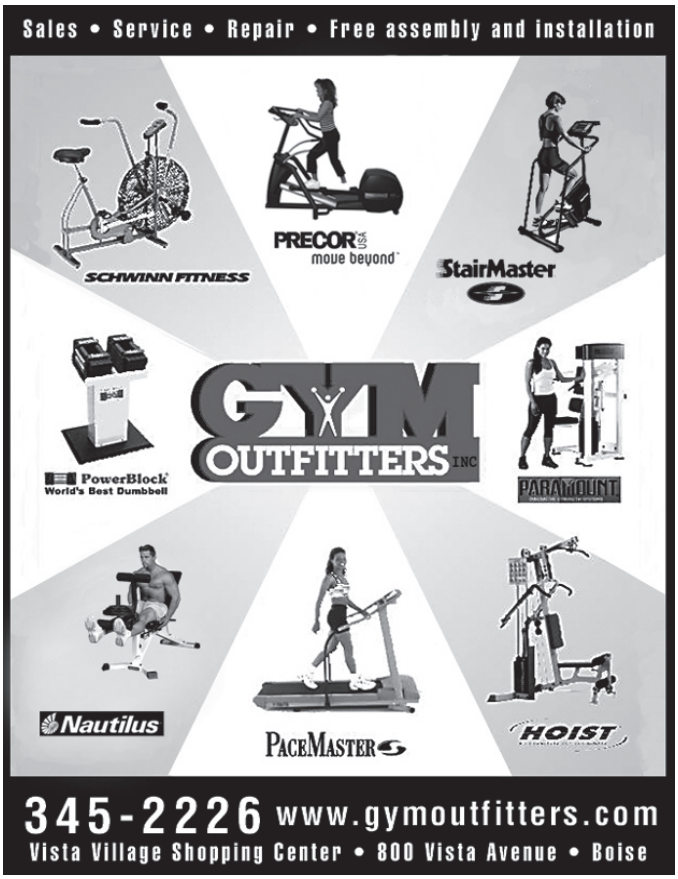

PHOTO BY LORIE PALMER

PHOTO BY LORIE PALMER

LEFT: ***Weaving the cane—The process is intricate and tedious, but ultimately rewarding.***

ABOVE: ***A finished chair—Valor Russell displays one result of his labor.***

Do it yourself

Learning the 'lost art' of chair caning

By Lorie Palmer

A chair is only as good as the seat in it," reads a business card of Valor Russell's. Though it seems fairly obvious, Russell takes the phrase seriously.

"You can have a beautiful, expensive chair, but if the seat isn't any good, the chair isn't worth a thing," he said. Russell taught himself to cane chairs when he was sixteen years old and living in Vermont. "I knew some people who needed their chair seats fixed, so I learned how to do it," he said.

Russell purchased a booklet from the H&H Perkins Company in Connecticut and followed the painstaking seven-step directions. Russell, now forty-nine, has woven natural cane through more than two hundred chairs through the years. He did this from age sixteen on, after high school while he and a partner owned a custom furniture business, and since then part-time while living in Washington and for the last decade-plus in Idaho.

"A pressed cane seat, where you use a pre-woven piece of cane, takes about an hour to complete," Russell said. However, the hand-woven cane seats are another story. "It's definitely a craft and it takes a long time—you have to like working intricately with your hands," he said. "To complete all the steps to weave the cane, it takes up to eight hours per chair."

The tedious process includes wetting the cane and then, using an awl and wooden pegs to hold the cane in the holes, weaving the cane in a variety of patterns to form diagonal holes. Later, a wet binder piece of cane is woven through the outside rows of holes to hide the holes and hold the cane in place. It becomes tight when it dries. Russell charges about ninety cents per hole, counted on the chair seat's perimeter.

"A small chair could have forty to sixty holes, while a large chair can have

up to eighty or ninety holes," he said. "It can be expensive to have these seats repaired, but most of the time we're talking about very nice, expensive oak or other hardwood chairs and it's worth it."

Russell said the caned chairs are attractive and sturdy—"as long as you don't stand on them."

"That's the reason they break ninety-nine percent of the time," he said. "Otherwise, they wear very well and I guarantee my work."

Russell said he doesn't know of anyone else who currently canes chairs in the area, but understands longtime Grangeville resident, the late Vern Willey, did this.

"People are referred to me by local restorers who refinish but don't cane," Russell said.

Word of mouth and classified advertising in the local newspaper have brought in most of Russell's caning business—mostly from around the region. "I know people have these great chairs sitting around in their sheds, barns or attics and all they need is a new seat," he said.

Besides acknowledging their wearability, Russell feels the aesthetic value of the chairs is important. "They look good, antiqued and impressive and add to any home," he said.

Russell is trying to pass the tradition of caning down to his fifteen-year-old daughter, and since they are both left-handed, he thought the progress might be smooth.

"But it's a complicated process," he shook his head. "It is kind of a lost art, though, and I'd be happy to see it continue—and I'd be glad for the help, too." ■

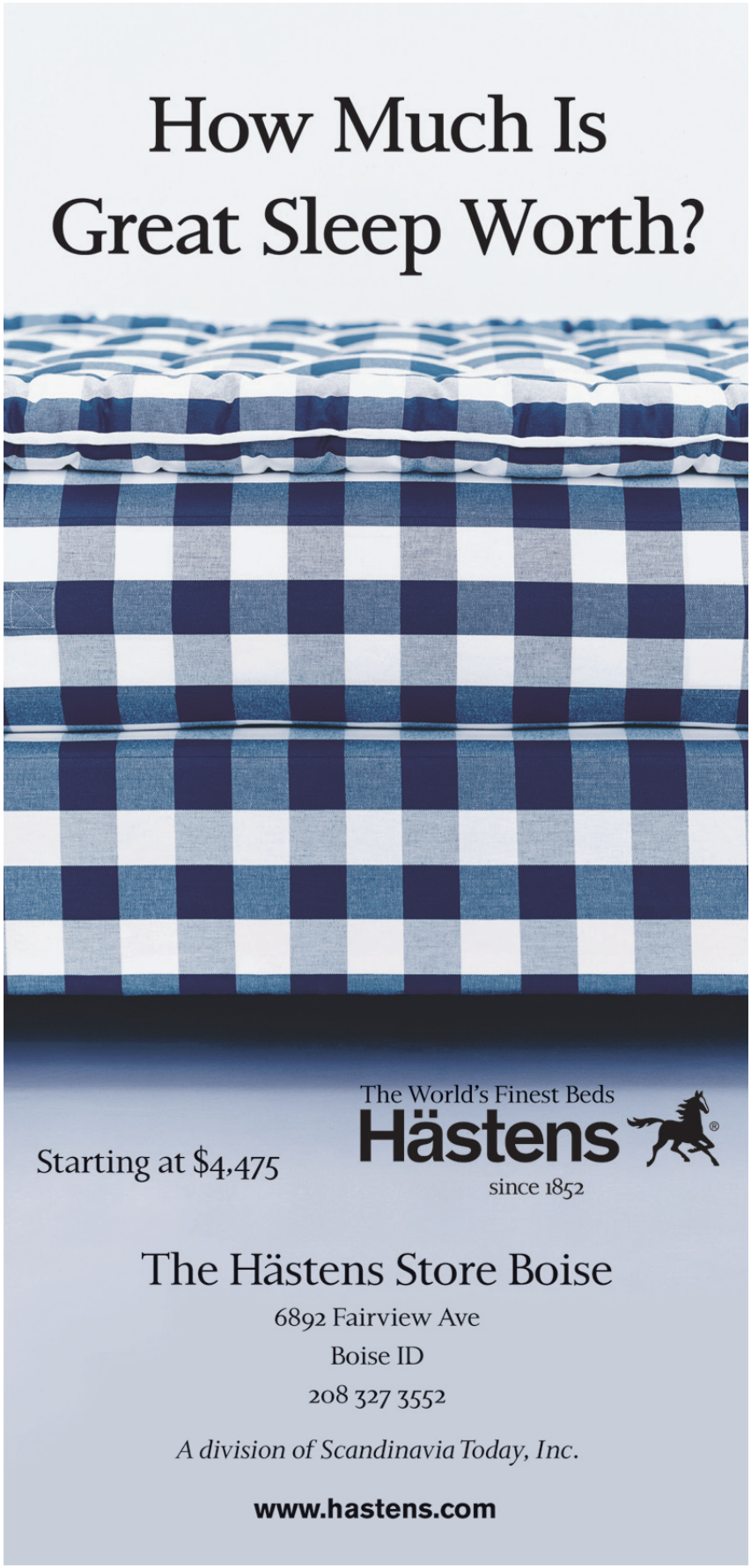

PHOTO BY BOBBI ROBBINS

Today, we garden alone—But living traditionally means expecting that your neighbors will be a part of your life.

Living with Unexpected Realities

By Vincent Kituku

What surprised me was my inability to understand whether my crying was because a neighbor had died or because no one informed me about his death.

Moving to suburban America brought unexpected realities of life. Life was different from how it was lived it in Kangundo, Kenya. My bones tightened when, after moving in what was then a new subdivision, my neighbors started installing fences around their properties. There was no more open space between our houses. I couldn't talk to a neighbor in the backyard area without having to step on something.

The fences had a little comfort for me. Droppings from my neighbors' pets were not something to worry about. I also didn't have to worry about those pets and neighbors' children messing up my garden. In Kangundo, pets or a neighbor's children were part

of life. They messed your property, you talked with your neighbor about it, and things cooled off a bit before another mess occurred. Sometimes one has to wonder why traditional living might be slow in progress. Is it because of the time spent talking with neighbors?

The uncomfortable situation of fences between neighbors became secondary when I noticed that my grass needed mowing. I never thought of a mower as we were making plans to live where we live. I had to borrow one from a neighbor—which I did for several weeks. But my good neighbor couldn't help me with the shock of learning that I didn't have a goat or cow to benefit from a resource (grass) I had. To think of mowing, bagging the grass, and just tossing it was a new suburban burden. A burden I have managed to circumvent over the years. That grass feeds my vegetables year after year.

Those things, fences and mowing happened before the death of the neighbor I had learned to love. A tall retired man, he was a man of few words. He pulled weeds from his flowers in the front yard. That is where we met as I was doing my customary walk/run or push-your body activity that we are told will keep you alive. Sometimes I would see him when I was driving and then stop just to chat.

What did we talk about? He was probably forty years older than I, but we somehow related to a point that when I stopped to say hello, he stopped pulling weeds. We talked about families, taking care of yards and how communities were changing. We talked about life.

Sometimes one has to wonder why traditional living might be slow in progress. Is it because of the time spent talking with neighbors?

In the summer of 1998, I didn't see my neighbor out pulling weeds. Had he taken a long trip or was he visiting a child or a relative somewhere else? Every time I walked or drove past his house, I thought of him. The place was quiet. The chats we had enjoyed, taken for granted at the time they happened, were now something I longed for.

The fall season brought unexplained relief. You are not supposed to see neighbors. It's cold and you need to be inside, warm and oblivious of what is around you. However, one day my wife came back from her walk and announced that she had just learned that my neighbor had died over three months ago.

That was enough. I had agreed to live with fences around me. I had mowed the lawn with my own lawnmower that my wife suggested I purchase instead of using my neighbor's mower, even though I only used his when he wasn't and I used my own gas. But for my neighbor to die and be buried without my knowledge felt strange. I have never known why, but I cried and I still feel vulnerable when I think of it.

Traditional living had me attend weddings to which I was never invited. It allowed me to witness something that neighbors did outside their houses. It rewarded me with the experience of attending a neighbor's funeral and the funerals of people I never knew but who were known by somebody I knew. You say nothing, yet the words extracted from your presence are never forgotten. You do nothing, yet being there means you did everything you could given the circumstances. No one can figure out anything else that you might have done.

You mourn and cry with the grieving family. You re-live the life you had with the deceased by telling stories of shared experiences. The exercise heals you as it heals the close relatives of the dead neighbor. Your collective mourning becomes the steppingstone as you all re-learn how to live without someone you loved, knew or was known and loved by someone you care about. ■

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Cloud of Dust

By Wallace J. Swenson

When Spring hits the valley, and willows droop green,
There's a hard battle fought that has to be seen.
There's only one winner, the loser is bust,
And both know the score, not a matter of just.

A winter of waitin' and lazin' around.
With hay in the manger, and sleeping real sound;
The Cayuse ain't ready, his joints full of rust,
Not wantin' to fool with a calf's cut and thrust.

One eye on the cowboy and one on the gate,
He knows from past years to just stand and wait
For the loop to be thrown, round his neck to be trussed,
Then back on his haunches he'll lean, as he must.

The blanket soon falls, with a saddle to come,
Hated bit in his teeth, quick nip at a thumb.
Then onto his back, they don't show much trust,
As one holds his head, ear twisted to bust.

The cowboy will settle, the horse knows the move
That's comin' up next, is the one that will prove
Who's gonna get dirty and beat up and mussed,
And who will be standing, pleased and nonplussed.

His head is released and a spur rakes his flank
And his back takes an arch, reins draw tight with a yank.
Back out of the saddle the greenhorn is thrust
He lands on his face, t'weren't no time to adjust.

The rail-sitters holler with hoots of delight
And point crooked fingers from the fence top's safe height.
The boy shows some spunk, grabs his hat with disgust
And stands for a moment, his eyes to adjust.

Round one is over, but there's more to be had,
But for now he's triumphant and the cowboy looks mad.
A winter spent loafing, the boy's getting cussed
For leavin' the horse in a big cloud of dust. ■

ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

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Rod Jessick, executive chef at the five-star Coeur d'Alene Resort, and a panel of top Idaho chefs will judge the entries. We're awarding cold, hard cash plus an assortment of top-notch products from The Pampered Chef® and Young Chef's Academy® to the winning entrants. Winning recipes will be published in future issues of *IDAHO magazine*.

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Recipe Title: (Use additional sheets if necessary)

Idaho Preferred Product/s used: (List for each recipe)

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Sesame Steak

By Austin Prince

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. sirloin steak
2 Tbsp. sesame seeds
2 Tbsp. sesame oil
3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
6 oz. small mushrooms
1 large onion
6 scallions, chopped diagonally
2 tsp. cornstarch
2 Tbsp. Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 Tbsp. soy sauce
a few drops Tabasco
2" piece of ginger, peeled and finely julienned
2 garlic cloves, crushed
steamed rice

PREPARATION

> Trim steak and cut into thin strips, about 1/2" thick. Make the marinade in a bowl. Blend the cornstarch with the rice wine or dry sherry, then stir in lemon juice, soy sauce, tabasco, ginger, and garlic. Stir in the steak strips. Cover and leave in a cool place for three to four hours.

> Place sesame seeds in a large frying pan and dry-fry over moderate heat, shaking the pan, until the seeds are golden. Set them aside.

> Heat the sesame and vegetable oils in the wok or frying pan. Drain the steak, reserve the marinade, and stir fry a few pieces at a time until browned. Remove with slotted spoon.

> Add the mushrooms and onions and stir fry for two or three minutes. Add the scallions and stir fry for one minute more.

> Return the steak to the frying pan, together with the reserved marinade, and stir over a moderate heat for an additional two minutes or until the ingredients are evenly coated with glaze. Sprinkle the sesame seeds on top and serve immediately with steamed rice.

Austin Prince attends Central Academy High School in Meridian.

Elderberry Chocolate Supremes

By Zooey Byram

INGREDIENTS

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or stick margarine, melted
1 cup crunchy peanut butter
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla
2 oz. Dorothy's© Wild Elderberry Jelly (or your favorite jelly)

Glaze topping
1 cup white chocolate chips
1 Tbsp. shortening

PREPARATION

> Preheat oven to 350º. Coat a 9" x 13" baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

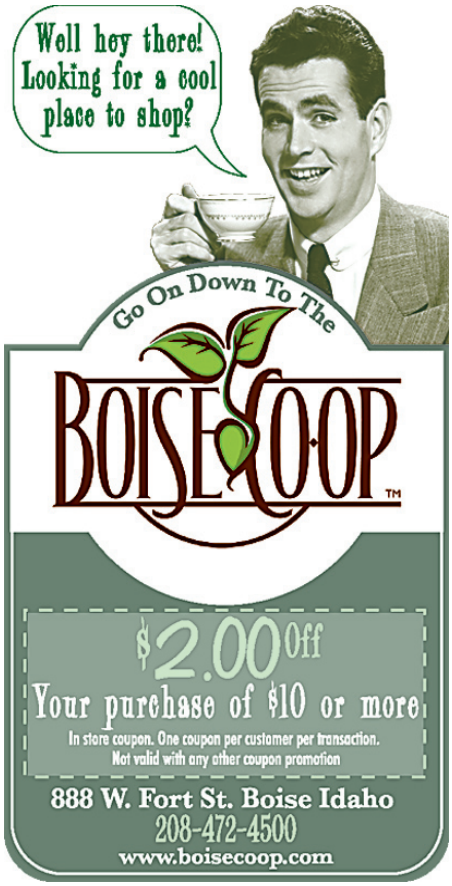
> In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients, except the jelly. Beat with an electric beater on medium speed for two minutes or until blended. Reserve one cup of the peanut butter mixture. Spread the remaining mixture over the bottom of the baking dish. Spread the jelly evenly over the mixture and add the reserved peanut butter mixture over the top.

> Bake thirty-five to forty minutes or until the topping is golden. Remove from oven. Melt together glaze topping and drizzle over cookies.

> Refrigerate, then cut into bars and serve.

Yield: Forty to forty-eight bars.

Zooey Byram lives in Coeur d'Alene.



feb 1 - mar 10/2008 idaho calendar of events

feb.

tba	Sweethearts Ball, Post Falls
tba	Mardi Gras Festival, Mullan
1-24	Winter Games of Idaho, Boise
1	Starlight Race Series, Sandpoint
1	Jose-Luis Orozco, music, Sun Valley
1,2	The Tennessee Three, band, Nampa
1-2	Bear Lake Hillclimb, Geneva
1-2	The Follies, Mardi Gras, Sandpoint
1-3	Women with Bait Tournament, Riggins
1-5	Madcap Mardi Gras, Sandpoint
2	Music on the Mountain, Sandpoint
2	Telemark Race Series, Sun Valley
2	Boulder Mountain Tour, Sun Valley
2	Mountain Mayhem Co-Ed Rally, Island Park
2-3	Super Bowl Shoot Out Roping, Kuna
2-3	Fire and Ice Winter Fest, Lava Hot Springs
2-3	Polar Bear Float, Lava Hot Springs
2-3	Championship Sled Dog Races, Priest Lake
2,9	Stacys Fun Race, Pebble Creek, Inkom
3	Jazz on a Sunday Afternoon, Sandpoint
3	Crab Feed, Winchester
3	Galena Cross Country Ski Festival, Sun Valley
4	Monday Night Blues Jam, Sandpoint
5	Trivia Tuesday, Sandpoint
6,13	I Can Draw!, children's art class, Idaho Falls
6,13	Southern ID Pinto Horse Assn. Schooling Shows, Al Birt Arena, Nampa
7	The Banff Mountain Film Fest, Idaho Falls
7	Relay For Life Kick Off, Pocatello
7	Powder Party, Sandpoint
7-10	U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix, Donnelly
7,14	Learning to See, adult drawing, Idaho Falls
8	Swing Kings, Sandpoint
8	Chocolate Walk, Coeur d'Alene
8	Boise Baroque Orchestra, Nampa
8	The Magic of Craig Hartman, Montpelier
8	Megaworks, magic, Lava Hot Springs
8-9	Wine & Chocolate Tasting, Sandpoint
9	Ice Fishing Derby, Elk River
9	Open 4D Barrell Race, F-Bar Arena, Kuna
9	Men are Pigs Heart Breakers Run, Boise
9	Nampa Rec Indoor Tri-athlon, Nampa
9	Galena Snowshoe Race & Walk, Sun Valley
9	Potato Cup Nordic Race & Tour, Pocatello
10	Leif's Race, Sun Valley
10	CDA Symphony Orchestra, Post Falls
11-17	Random Acts of Kindness, Burley
12	The Philharmonic Orchestra, Burley
13	Fiddlers Abroad Concert, Sandpoint
13	Crazy for You Cabaret Luncheon, Sun Valley
13-29	*Between Fences*, Lava Hot Springs
14	Valentine Dinner at Galena, Sun Valley
14	Sweethearts Party, Sandpoint
14-15	Mark Holt, guitarist, Ketchum
14-16	Simplot Games, Pocatello
15	Starlight Race Series, Schweitzer, Sandpoint
15	Evening Gallery Walk, Sun Valley
15-16	American Dog Derby, Ashton
15-17	Resort Winter Blues Festival, Coeur d'Alene
15-17	Idaho Snowriders Presidents Day Weekend, Mountain Home
15-17	Horse Affairs, Boise
16	Boulder Classic Tour, Sun Valley
16	Moonlight Snowshoeing, Sun Valley
16	Bikini Barrel Race, Kuna
16	Youth Ski Giant Slalom, Inkom
16	mARTI-Gras Kids Carnival, Coeur d'Alene
16	Snowmobilers Ball, Stanley
16	Hospital Aux. Snowball Dance, Montpelier
16	Presidents Day Street Party, Ketchum
16	Leon's Fat Ass 50K, Boise
16-17	Sun Valley Opera, Sun Valley
16-17	Jazz Dinners at Galena Lodge, Sun Valley
17	The Rock Cup Giant Slalom, Inkom
17	Lecture, Jim & Jamie Dutcher, Sun Valley
18	Scout Merit Badge Program, Inkom
18	Barrage, Fiddle Fest, Idaho Falls
20	Five Minutes of Fame, Sandpoint
20	Wake up with Hailey, Hailey
20-23	Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, Moscow
21-23	Watercolor Workshop, Idaho Falls
22	Red Dress Concert, Idaho Falls
22	Jeni Flemming-Acoustic Trio, Burley
22	Coyote Moon, music, Montpelier
22-23	*The Little Mermaid*, Caldwell
22-24	Northwest Gym Fest, Coeur d'ALene
22-3/9	*The Miser*, romantic comedy, Wallace
23	Habitat Rail Jam Contest, Driggs
23	C.W. Hog Ski-A-Thon, Pebble Creek, Inkom
23	Idaho Falls Ski Club Day, Inkom
23	8th Ol' Men's Rendezvous, Island Park
23	TVATPA, Antique Tractor Pull, Caldwell
23	Chili Cookoff, Burley
23-24	Idaho Winter Games at Silver Mtn., Kellogg
24	6th Snow Box Derby, Sun Valley
24	Imani Winds Quartet, Sun Valley
25-28	Special Olympics Invitational Games, Boise
26	Banff Radical Reels, Sandpoint
26	Imani Winds Quartet, Caldwell
28	Gypsy, Idaho Falls
28-3/7	2008 Masters World Cup Cross Country Championships, McCall
29	Snake River Flats Concert, Rupert
29	Bear Lake High School's Bear Essentials, Singing Fundraiser, Montpelier
29	*Music Man*, Blackfoot
29	Soupfest, YWCA, Lewiston
29-3/2	Outrageous Air Show, Sandpoint
29-3/2	Targhee Telemark Festival, Driggs

mar.

1	Annual Wine Stein & Dine, Post Falls
1	6th Share Your Heart Ball, Sun Valley
1	Double Header Open 4D Barrel Race, Kuna
1	*Robinson Crusoe*, Sandpoint
1-2	Gem & Mineral Show, Caldwell
1-2	Sawtooth Ski Festival, Sun Valley
2	Les Bois 10K, Dirt Road Hill Run, Boise
2	Telemark Race Series, Sun Valley
4	The Rock Cup GS, Inkom
6	Imani Winds Quartet, Sandpoint
7	Boise Baroque Orchestra, Nampa
8	The Alley Cats, Arimo
8	Tom Rush, guitarist, Idaho Falls
8-9	Telemark Festival, Pebble Creek, Inkom
9	Moveable Feast, Library Fundraiser, Sun Valley
9-11	Home Builders & Garden Show, Lewiston
10	Snowboard Rally, Pebble Creek, Inkom

Do you have a special event in your town? Send us the vital information, and we'll make sure friends and neighbors across the street and across the state know about it. All functions must be free to the public or darn cheap. Events charging admission fees are welcome to purchase ad space. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: The first of the month, one month prior to date of publication. Example: Deadline for the June 2008 issue is May 1.

WRITE TO: IDAHO magazine Calendar of Events
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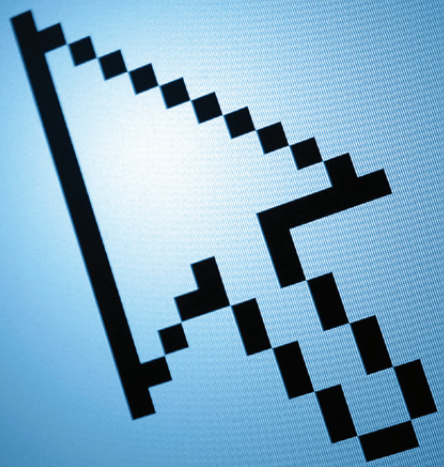

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february contributors

Beth Cofer,
freelance writer and marketing coordinator, graduated from BSU in 1992 with a BA in Communication/English, emphasis in Journalism, and an MA in Technical Writing in 1995. Her travels have taken her to many places and jobs, but she always finds her way back to the Gem State. Congrats to Beth, husband Matt, and big brothers Clinten and Cash on their new arrival, Will.

Linda Funaiole
is a freelance writer and former *Idaho Statesman* reporter. She lives in Meridian, but travels throughout the Treasure Valley in search of story ideas. She has a BA degree in Journalism, espouses freedom of the press, values integrity, likes fountains, and loves her son, Matt, most of all.

Cecil Hicks
lives in Sandpoint with his wife, Maureen. They have five children and eight grandchildren. Cecil has worked as a firefighter, a smokejumper, a reporter for weekly newspapers, and as a 4th grade elementary school teacher. Now retired, his hobbies include golfing, writing, reading, and walking.

Jana Kemp,
founder of Meeting & Management Essentials, authored five books including: *Prepared Not Paranoid*; *Building Community in Buildings*; and *NO! How One Simple Word Can Transform Your Life*. Jana served District 16 in the Idaho House of Representatives from 2004-2006 and lives in Garden City with her husband and step-daughter.

Dr. Vincent Muli Kituku,
Idaho resident since 1992, is an award-winning motivational speaker/trainer, including a Certified Speaking Professional recognition, the highest designation presented by the National Speakers Association. Presenting to over 300 schools, Vincent has been the motivational speaker for the BSU football team since 1998. He is published in newspapers and magazines across the nation.

Dick Lee
illustrates *IDAHO magazine*.

"I am still, and probably always will be, looking for my 'voice' and trying to master the various media. My medium of preference . . . is drawing."

Gena Lott
is a writer who lives in Ogden, Utah. This is her first article for *IDAHO magazine*.

Dallin Moon
grew up in the Magic Valley of Southern Idaho. He earned an English degree from Brigham Young University–Idaho, paying his tuition by writing for the school's fund-raising department and newspaper. He presented papers at several English professional conferences in Idaho and Utah. He is currently a technical writer in Rexburg.

Dene Oneida
is the managing editor of *IDAHO magazine*. He is a professional writer, editor, actor, and dramaturg. Dene has three lovely daughters and resides in Boise.

Lorie Palmer
is the community editor for Idaho's oldest weekly newspaper, the *Idaho County Free Press* in Grangeville. She and her husband have three daughters, two Pomeranian dogs, and a tabby cat.

Ryan Peck
is a native Idahoan. His interests include songwriting, strumming on his guitar, mandolin, and banjo, attempting to break the speed of sound on his road bike, drinking hot chocolate, watching movies with his girlfriend, and enjoying Boise's foothills.

Dora Rollins
is a publications editor at Washington State University who enjoys helping others express their ideas, but has a few of her own as well. Rock climbing provides much-needed relief from both internal and external sources of writing pressure. She lives in Moscow.

Bill Ryan,
Pocatello native and graduate of ISU, earned a master's degree at Marquette University. He worked in radio in Idaho and Utah then in 1965 became ISU's first fulltime alumni director. Later, he taught journalism courses at ISU and became a writer-editor for UPI in Texas. Now retired, he gets back to Idaho as often as possible.

Wallace J. Swenson,
writer and Idaho native, lives in the Upper Snake River Valley with his wife of 45 years. A twenty-year military veteran, he recently retired, writes full time, and is active in the Idaho Writer's League, his first novel, *Morgan's Pasture*, is due out in the spring of 2009.

Les Tanner
Family: Married fifty-one years; two kids, three grandkids. Fun: Fishing, writing, photography, gardening, metal detecting, racquetball, butterfly collecting. Anything else? Oh, yes. Taught mathematics for over forty years.

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