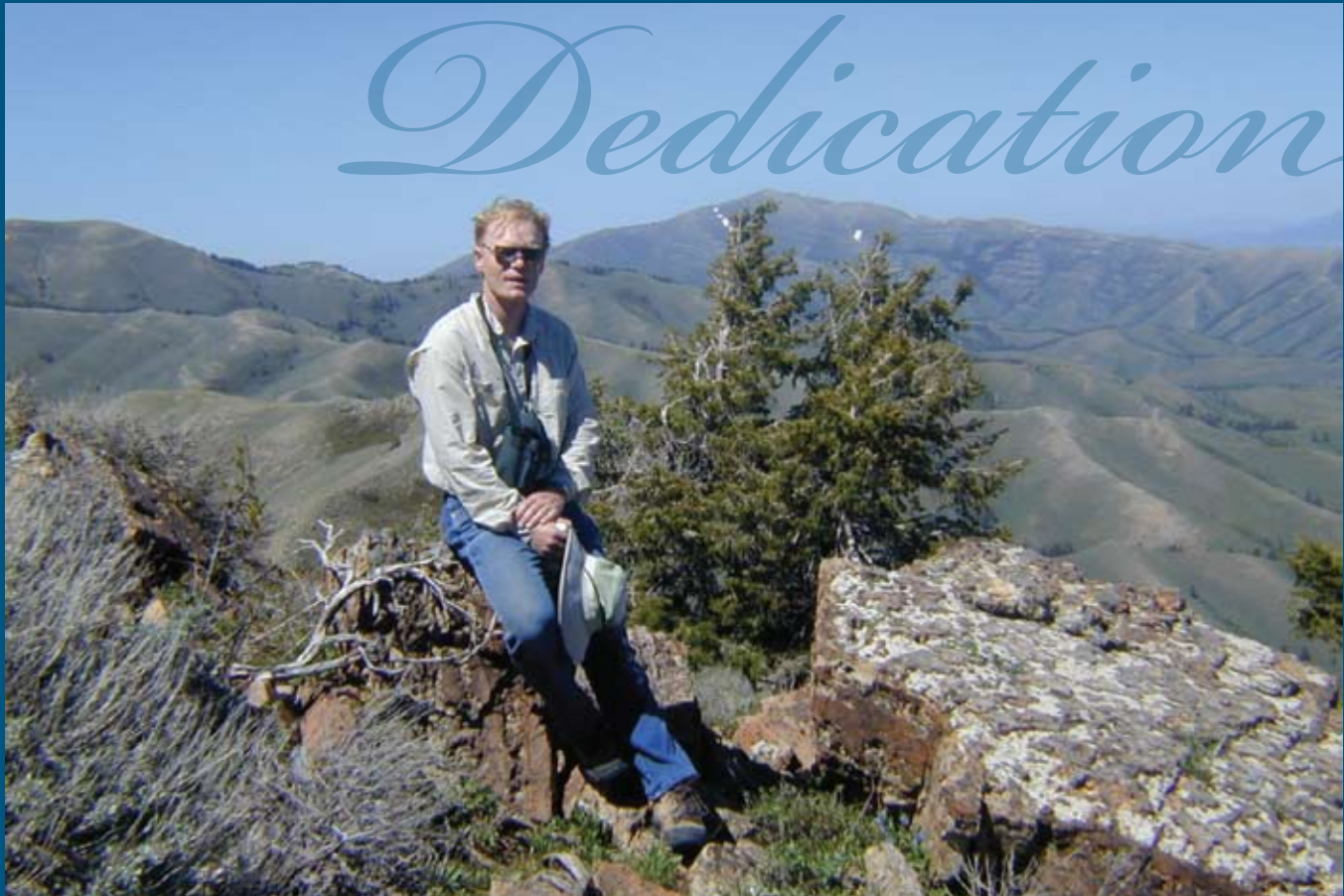


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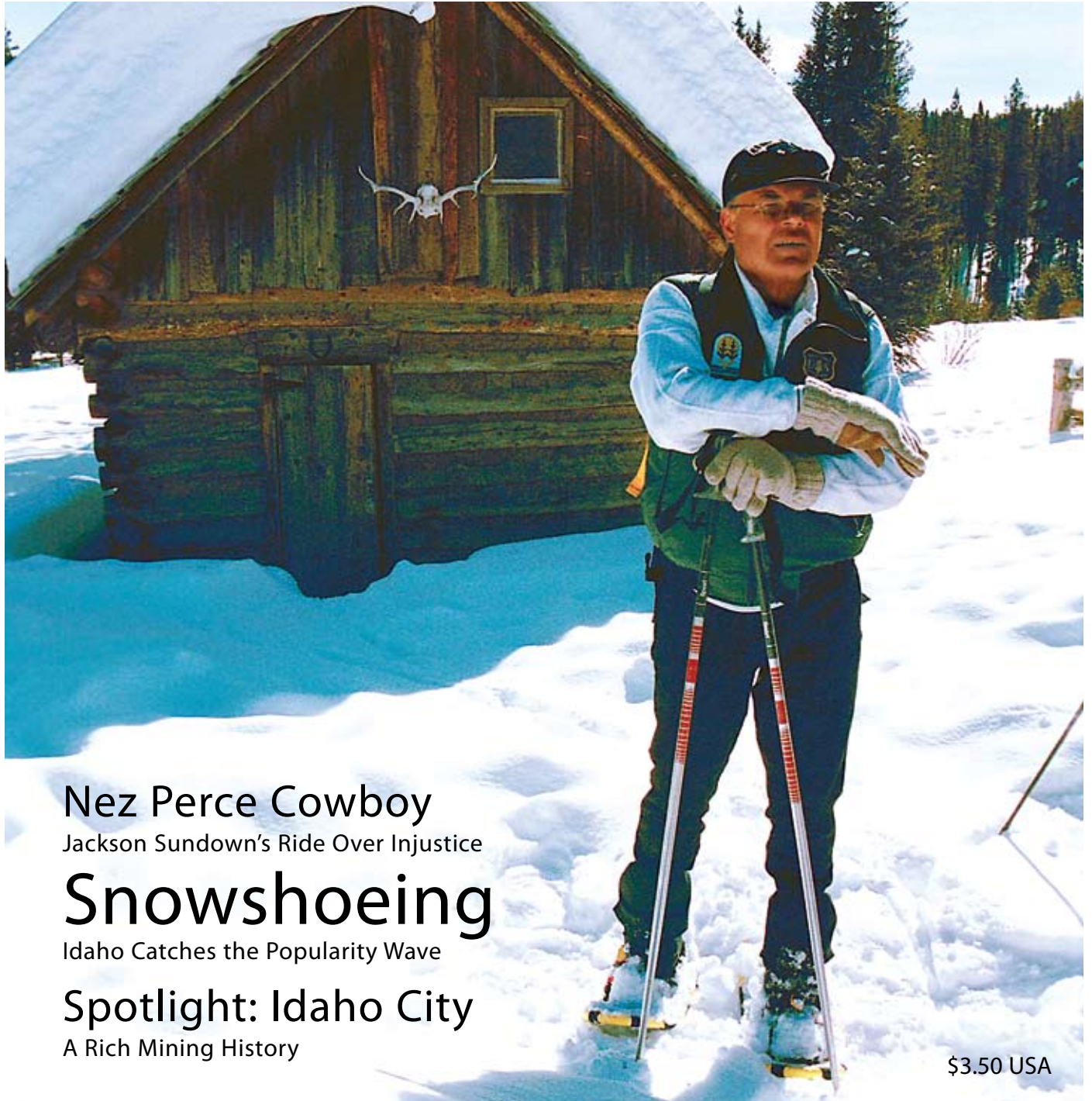
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The 2005 IDAHO magazine Fiction Contest is open to residents, nonresidents, and visitors of the great Gem State. Submissions will be organized into the following categories:

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- Adult (over 18 years of age)
- Professional (60% plus of your income from writing)

Submissions should be between approximately 500–2,500 words. Please send a cover letter containing your name, contact information, category, and the title of your story. **Entries with insufficient postage will be returned to sender.** Entries will not be returned. All entries must be postmarked by January 31, 2005. Please send a hard copy to:

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Nez Perce Cowboy 14

One magical day in 1916, Jackson Sundown and popular demand triumphed at the famous Pendleton (Oregon) Round-Up, bringing poetic justice—and the first world bronc riding championship to an American Indian. Here's the story of an Idaho legend's finest hour.

By Margo Aragon

Idaho City—Spotlight City 32

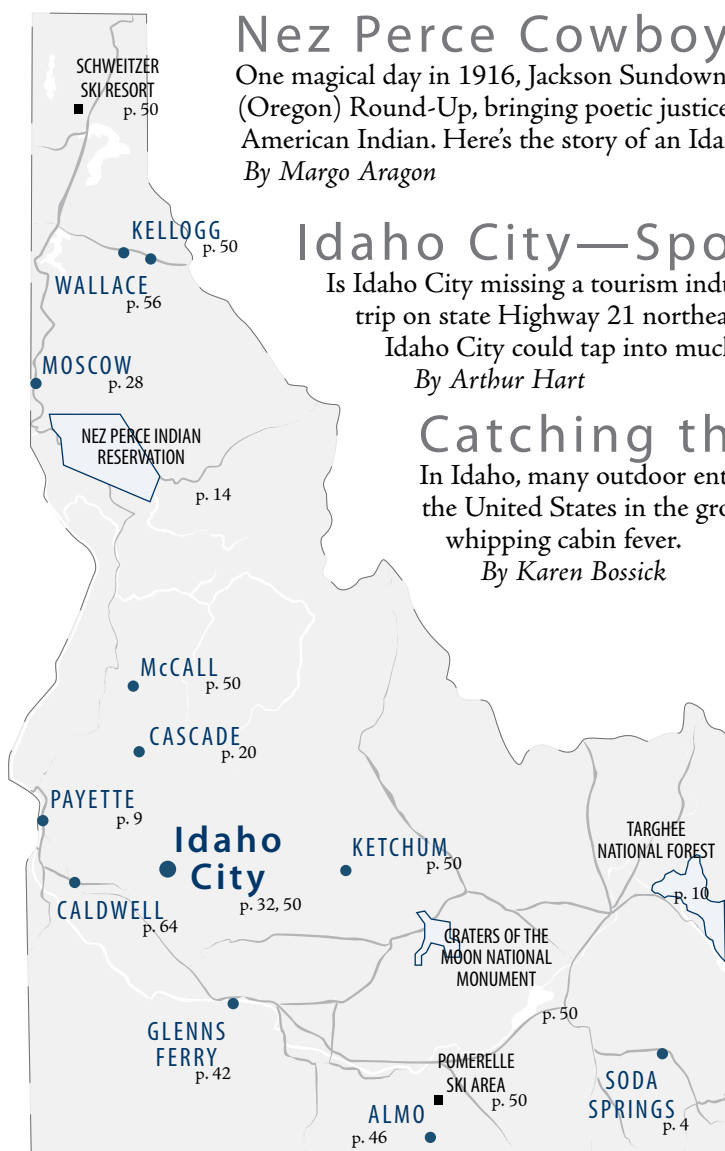
Is Idaho City missing a tourism industry motherlode? The historic mining town, just a short day trip on state Highway 21 northeast of Boise, has tourism appeal, but an urban designer says Idaho City could tap into much more of its potential.

By Arthur Hart

Catching the Snowshoeing Wave 50

In Idaho, many outdoor enthusiasts have joined millions of their counterparts throughout the United States in the growing sport of snowshoeing. See how Idahoans, statewide, are whipping cabin fever.

By Karen Bossick



Idaho legends. They abound in the state's history, into the present day, and likely will continue into the future. While the list of remarkable, storied people in Idaho is lengthy, this month's issue of IDAHO magazine looks at two extraordinary high-profile individuals. Interestingly, the defining events of their lives occurred six years apart. In 1910, North Idaho firefighting supervisor Edward Pulaski displayed incredible intestinal fortitude and knowledge in the face of the worst forest fire in United States history. In the process, Pulaski, one given to downplaying the spotlight, ironically etched himself into the realm of Idaho legend.

Then in 1916, Jackson Sundown, a Nez Perce Tribe cowboy, wrote a short history chapter himself by winning the world bronc riding championship at Pendleton, Oregon. Sundown overcame an earlier race-based judgment to become the first Indian to win a world championship in rodeo, and ensconced himself into the tradition of stories passed down. Margo Aragon's vivid essay narrative, starting on page 14, provides an insightful account of the triumphant event for Jackson Sundown. Take a look inside. And join the Idaho legends.

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one spud short 4

A "numbskull" reeled in

front porch tales 9

He taught me to dance

hitting the high points 10

Highpointing: an Idaho account

community coalition 20

"Vacuum brigade" rallied to open Ashley Inn

outdoor winter adventure 24

Never underestimate Darby Canyon

moscow do-it-yourselfers 28

Faculty brainpower built University Heights

equine dentistry 42

Look a gift horse in the mouth

deep idaho roots 46

A family store tradition

who we are 56

Ed Pulaski: inventor, North Idaho firefighting hero

historical snapshot 64

The mail via wagon

idaho extras 62-63

Service Directory; Idaho Links; Calendar of Events

cover photo:

Photographer: Karen Bossick

Pictured: Park ranger Bob Smet, a retired airline pilot from Belgium. Smet, who is multilingual, discusses the history of the old mining town of Galena during free snow-shoe hikes sponsored by the Sawtooth National Forest. Smet is standing in front of one of Galena's historic buildings, about twenty-four miles north of Ketchum.

A “Numbskull” Reeled In

Eastern Idaho fishing tale

By Shirley Lund

If I hold my fishing pole just right and wander casually back to the camper, no one will pay any attention to me, I think to myself. I doubt any of the other campers are close enough to notice how the fishing line just kinda disappears into the mess that is my hair. However, if the sun hits the bright orange and silver lure, it will send a signal that can be seen for miles.

“So, where’s your hat?” I ask myself.

“If I had my hat, dummy, this wouldn’t have happened in the first place,” I answer myself.

Should I wake my significant other and tell him I have a fish hook buried in my scalp? He’d laugh. Just like he did awhile ago when he told me, “If you keep casting that way, you’re going to end up with a fish hook in your skull.”

No, he’d be mad. His long-awaited fishing trip would be interrupted by a fifty-mile drive to find a doctor.

At the very least, he’d make snide remarks about my inability to learn something as simple as casting a daredevil with a spinning reel.

He’d been so patient, too.

At first.

“Let the line off the reel three or four feet,” he’d said. “Now hold the line against the bail release with your finger. (He showed me what a bail release was—a little lever that locks and unlocks the reel). Make a wide arc with the pole, and at the exact moment the line gets taut, let it go.”

It looked so easy when he did it. The lure settled in the water exactly where he told me it would. But I just couldn’t seem to get the hang of it.

“You let go of the line too soon,” he corrected calmly, as my lure disappeared into the thick vegetation behind us.

“You didn’t let go soon enough,” he corrected, not quite so calmly, as the lure plopped into the water about two feet in front of us.

“I’m going back to the camper and take a nap,” he said, after the

third boondoggle. “You coming?”

As soon as he was out of sight, my technique improved considerably. I put that lure right in front of



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

one spud short

the fish's noses every time. The fish, in turn, ignored it every time. Once in a while, a big lunker would follow it all the way to shore, then turn and swim cockily away.

After twenty or thirty casts, I had run out of names to call the fish, and my casting arm was beginning to complain, too. What do I want with a stinking fish, anyway, I thought. After bragging rights had all been used up, I'd have to behead it, clean it, skin it, cut it into fillets, and cook it. I didn't like fish all that much, anyhow.

Adding insult to injury, I reeled in too fast, and my lure became tangled in the long grass lining the pond. After several attempts to pull it loose, I vented my frustration with one mighty jerk. The lure gave way and my bottom hit the ground about the same time the lure connected with my head.

What do I want with a stinking fish, anyway, I thought. After bragging rights had all been used up, I'd have to behead it, clean it, skin it, cut it into fillets, and cook it. I didn't like fish all that much, anyhow.

Well, at least it didn't hurt, I thought. It's probably just tangled in my hair. Further examination proved otherwise. I pulled and tugged and cussed a little; then pulled and tugged and cussed a lot. It wouldn't budge. There was no pain and no blood. Must be where the slur "numbskull" came from, I thought. Nothing like a little humor to take the sting out of a bad situation.

Nothing was hurt except my pride, but I knew I was going to have to swallow that pronto. I needed help here.

Sitting in a chair outside the camper, I tried to think of a logical explanation for my mishap, but no matter how



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I worded it, it still sounded like it was—stupid.

A sleepy voice from the door of the camper startled me back to reality. “Did you have any luck?”

“Yeah, and it was all bad,” I grumbled. “I got a hook stuck in my head.”

from my tackle box.”

Did he have a knife to cut it out? Did he have cutters to cut off the hooks and pull it out? Nothing I could think of sounded like my idea of a good time.

“A piece of fishing line?” I said.

still intact.

“How did you do that? I hardly felt a thing.”

“Just one of the tricks of the trade,” he answered, nonchalantly.

If you promise not to laugh, or get mad, or make snide

Did he have a knife to cut it out?

Did he have cutters to cut off the hooks and pull it out? Nothing I could think of sounded like my idea of a good time.

“No problem, I can get that out.”

Just like that. No laughter, no anger, no snide remarks.

“I just have to get something

“You’ve got to be kidding!”

“Just hold still for a minute.”

A little pressure and a short tug later, my favorite fishing partner held up the hook—lure attached and barbs

remarks about dumb blondes trying to be smart fishermen, I’ll tell you the secret.

Shirley Lund lives in Soda Springs.

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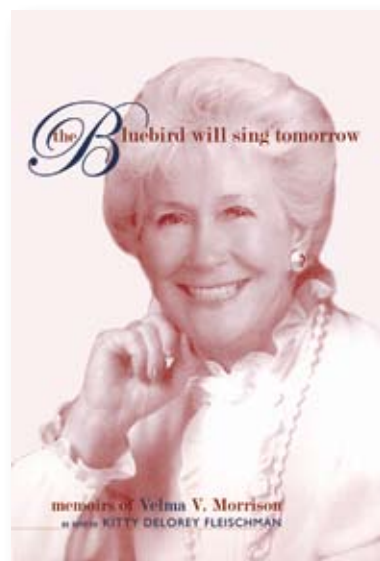
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He Taught Me to Dance

By Lynn Farley

His name was Norman and he taught me to dance.

Every Wednesday, at noon, Payette High School held a dance in its tiny basement gym. I was a freshman, new to the school, and doing my job as a wallflower, when he approached. I had seen him in history class, knew his last name was Jones, the same as mine.

"Want to dance?" he asked.

"I don't know how," I answered, and felt a blush rise on my cheeks.

"Nothing to it," he said. "Do you

want to give it a try?"

When I nodded—my heart pounding so hard I felt I'd choke if I tried to speak—he led me out on the floor.

Classmates grinned as Norman told me to put my left hand on his shoulder. He took my other sweaty palm in his and said, "Now we've got the hands where they belong, let's work on the feet." He led me in a box-step waltz as the record player spun out "Heartaches."

"One-two-three," he counted, each number a reminder of where my feet were supposed to be. I looked down; steered my clumsy saddle shoes across the floor. By the time the song ended I was hooked on rhythm and dancing . . . and him.

Back in the classroom, Norman Jones, history teacher and father of a little girl named Lynn—the same as mine—was all business. Our time on

the dance floor was just another nice thing he had done that day for a new kid in school. But, for a fourteen-year old girl it was the beginning of a new life. After that, boys asked me to dance. I learned to jitterbug, swing and twirl . . . and waltz, just as Norman had taught me. Norman Jones, teacher of history, made history one noon hour when he transformed Cinderella from a wallflower into a princess.

I married a man who didn't dance. Norman Jones gave up his teaching career and became an insurance salesman. He called one day to sell us a life insurance policy, but we couldn't afford such security in those early years of our marriage. Norman Jones, successful as a dance instructor, struck out as a salesman.

There is a picture of Norman Jones on the faculty page of my 1947 high school yearbook. I drew a heart around his face, the closest thing to a "thank you" he ever received. A few years ago, I read of his death, and wondered if he realized what he did for me the first time I ever danced with a man. That day he gave me a paid-up policy of self-confidence in a few easy steps.

Lynn Farley lives in Boise.

LEFT: *Lynn Farley's high school history teacher, Norman Jones, on the faculty page of the 1947 Payette High School yearbook.*

LEFT INSET: *Lynn Farley's student picture in the Payette High School yearbook fifty-eight years ago.*

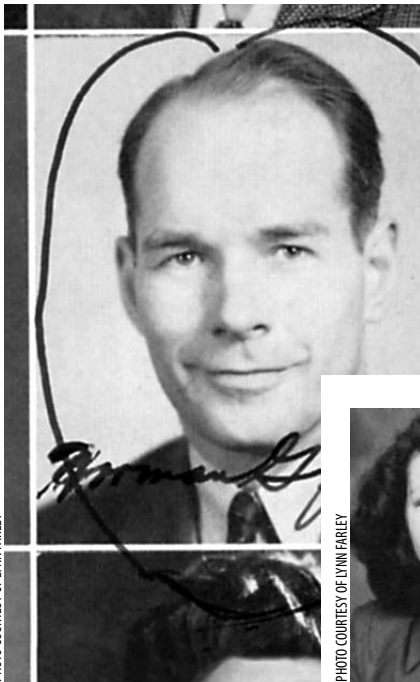


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PHOTO COURTESY OF LYNN FARLEY

Highpointing: An Idaho Account

Author culminates five-year pursuit: Becomes the first Idahoan to reach top elevations in all forty-four counties

By Dan Robbins

The time was 2 a.m., and I was awakened by the sounds of animals grunting and splashing in the lake near my campsite. A fearful couple of minutes passed before I heard hoofs click on rocks above the lake. Phew! Bears and the few other things I was worried about do not have hoofs. I peered out of the front of the tent to see several elk milling about the lake. The scene before me was surreal. The frost-covered grass and shim-

mering lake glistened under a bright moon. The dark, high, rocky ridges surrounding the basin provided a stark, mysterious backdrop. I had questioned coming out this far, and this late in the year. Even so, leaving the comforts of home, and the ensuing twelve-mile hike, had proven to be worth it for this scene alone.

The elk continued their grunting, splashing, and bugling for nearly an hour before I drifted

back to sleep. I awoke about five hours later and found the frost, moon, elk, and eeriness of the night long gone.

Once again, I focused on the task at hand.

The task that brought me to

Hikers ascend Snowyside Peak highpoint of Elmore County, in the Sawtooth Mountains, August 2004. Foreground: Dan Robbins, the first Idahoan to reach the peak elevations in all forty-four Idaho counties.



PHOTO BY RAMON LARA

this remote lake was to make it to the summit of Big Baldy—a mountain that stands 9,705 feet high, and is higher than any other ground in Valley County. My goal that morning: to hike the remaining four miles to the top of Big Baldy, thus completing my pursuit of the forty-four county highpoints of Idaho. That final leg of the journey, on October 5, 2004, was the easy part. The hard part came later in the day when I started the six-

Idaho counties. That distinction belongs, dually, to Ken Jones of Washington, and Bob Packard of Arizona. Those two completed the Idaho high-point feat back in 2001. By finishing, I did become just the third person—and the first Idahoan—to do so. Reaching the final highpoint ended a pursuit that started for me on July 31st, 1999, when I reached the top of Borah Peak, highpoint of Custer County. At the time, I

years, several people in the county highpointer's organization studied maps to figure out the highest points in each county. Andy Martin of Arizona ultimately determined Idaho's forty-four county highpoints. Martin publishes a book that lists the county highpoints of each United States state.

While I started off slowly (getting only a single highpoint in each of the 1999 and 2000 hiking seasons), I eventually learned of the

The frost-covered grass and shimmering lake glistened under a bright moon. The dark, high, rocky ridges surrounding the basin provided a stark, mysterious backdrop...leaving the comforts of home was worth it for this scene alone.

teen-mile hike back to the trailhead, and returned to civilization.

While it may seem strange, this ritual of county high-pointing is shared with hundreds of hikers nationwide. In fact, upon reaching the Big Baldy summit, I wasn't even the first to finish the

didn't even realize county high-pointing existed as a hobby. Now I've visited over fifty county highpoints in six states, and plan to do a lot more in the future.

You may be wondering who determined the highest point of each Idaho county. Well, over the

county highpointer's organization. This intrigued me a bit, so in the spring of 2001, I started collecting some nearby, "easy-to-do" highpoints. In July 2001, I teamed up with Ken Jones, who was then trying to be the first of the county highpointers to complete Idaho.

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hitting the high points



Ascending a talus-filled gully in eastern Idaho's Beaverhead Mountains, en route to the high-point of Clark County. This hiking trip was taken in July 2004.

PHOTO BY BRIAN ORTH

The experience spurred me on the rest of that summer to try and catch Ken, but he and the legendary Bob Packard would finish the highpoints of Idaho in September 2001. In early 2004, more than two years since Jones and Packard made Idaho history, no other hikers had completed the state's highpoint route. So, last spring, I finally focused on completing the entire state. With twenty-one highpoints down and twenty-three to go, I pushed hard throughout the summer. I completed eight highpoints in a five-day trip in June 2004 and nine during a five-day trip to northern Idaho in July. These two trips are more in the style of true county high-pointers, who push to get as many highpoints done in as little time as possible.

All of Idaho's forty-four county highpoints can be reached without the use of technical climbing gear, assuming that you attempt them

during summer months. Most highpoints are day trips that will take from two to eight hours. You can actually drive to the highpoints of several counties (Owyhee, Canyon, Latah, and you can come close in Ada and Twin Falls counties). One county highpoint will require a backpack trip (Valley), with backpack trips recommended on two others (Boise and Elmore). Idaho has three so-called "He-man" county highpoints. ("he-man" highpoints are those that require at least 5,000 feet of elevation gain to reach the summit.) Those three highpoints are Big Baldy (Valley), Borah Peak (Custer), and Hyndman Peak (Blaine). Idaho's highpoints range in elevation from 12,662-foot tall Borah Peak (Custer) to 3,084-foot high Pickles Butte (Canyon).

While the pursuit of these highpoints may seem dull to some, there's no arguing about the health

benefits. When I started up Mount Borah in 1999, I weighed 275 pounds. I've now lost over fifty pounds and run almost daily to keep fit for my hiking adventures. My story is not unique, as I heard a similar story from a highpointer I met from Washington who lost over thirty pounds during the past year in his pursuit of county highpoints.

In addition to health benefits, county high-pointing allows you to visit sections of the state you normally wouldn't visit. For instance, a lot of hikers from southern Idaho focus on the Sawtooth Mountains of central Idaho. While the Sawtooths are gorgeous, there are several other ranges in Idaho that are just as spectacular, and less frequently visited. From the top of Idaho's highpoints, you will see deserts, the mighty Teton range in Wyoming, hundreds of alpine lakes, large fields of wildflowers, and more. Were it not for county high-pointing, I would never have climbed a 7,000-foot peak near the Canadian border, or some unnamed peak tucked away in the southeast corner of Idaho. Each trip introduced me to new areas, new terrain, and new challenges.

County high-pointing also enables you to meet a lot of people.

I have hiked to the top of highpoints with twenty-one different people. Most of these people I met on the Internet, and several have turned into long-term friendships. That list of hiking partners also includes my wife, daughter, father, and niece, all of whom do not normally go on hiking trips. You will also get acquainted with other mammals while high-pointing. In recent county highpointing experiences, I have seen four moose, four black bear, four mountain goats, and a wolf. In fact, my experiences with seeing bear, moose, or wolf, have been solely on the Idaho county high-pointing trips.

In addition to seeing wildlife, I have seen snowfall in the Beaverhead Mountains (Clark County) on a day when it was one hundred degrees back in Boise. I've seen a mile-long ridge full of knee-high purple wildflowers (Benewah County). I've seen the bad as well: I watched mud slides come down a hillside during a heavy rainstorm in an area that had burned the previous year in Clearwater County. Oh, and I have seen the ugly too, watching the odometer in my SUV go from zero to seventy-thousand miles in too little time.

County high-pointing is definitely not all fun and games. Getting to Idaho's highpoints will challenge you in many ways. Your driving will be put to the test on highpoints like Clearwater County, where you drive twenty-five miles into the backcountry on rough roads and might only see one other person during that drive. Custer County will challenge your cardiovascular and leg strength with its seven-mile, 5,400-foot climb, as will dozens of other county highpoints. Valley County will challenge your stamina with its thirty-two-mile hike. Planning skills will be tried, as you attempt to piece together ways to reach multiple highpoints on one trip. Lastly, your very survival will be challenged as you face steep slopes with loose rock in counties like Clark County, adverse weather in all counties, grizzly bears in Fremont County, stray bullets from the shooting range in Canyon County, and ATVs in Owyhee County.

Dan Robbins lives in Boise.

HIGHPOINT HIGHLIGHTS

Top Five Idaho Highpoints:

Custer (Borah Peak):	12,662 feet
Butte (Diamond Peak):	12,197 feet
Blaine (Hyndman Peak):	12,009 feet
Lemhi (Bell Mountain):	11,612 feet
Clark (Unnamed Point):	11,200+ feet

Lowest County Highpoint:

Canyon (Pickles Butte): 3084 feet

Idaho's Average County Elevation: 8269 feet

Five Easy County Highpoints:

- Ada (Unnamed Point): you can drive to within a couple hundred feet of this highpoint.
- Canyon: there is a road to the top or an easy one-half-mile walk from pavement.
- Latah (Bald Mountain): road to the top.
- Jerome (Unnamed area): ten-minute walk.
- Twin Falls (Unnamed point): moderate driving, but easy walk to the top.

Five Difficult High Points:

- Idaho (Unnamed point): fifteen-mile hike that is remote, cross country, and involves a lot of side-hilling.
- Valley (Big Baldy): long drive coupled with a thirty-two-mile hike.
- Clearwater (Rhodes Peak): Twenty-five miles of dirt roads to drive, followed by thirteen miles of tough hiking.
- Teton (multiple peaks): you've got to climb three peaks in this county, that's more than twenty-five miles of hiking.
- Custer: Hiked 5,400 feet in a day.

Five Spectacular Highpoints:

- Elmore (Snowyside Peak): thirty-plus lakes visible from the top, scenic approach on the famous Toxaway-Petit loop, fun scramble at the end.
- Blaine: hike goes from Aspen groves, to Pine forest, to grass covered basins, to an alpine wonderland of lakes and steep rock cliffs.
- Fremont (North Targhee Peak): gorgeous hike that leads to a wind-swept portion of the Continental Divide.
- Bonner (Scotchman Peak): views of Lake Pend Oreille, jagged peaks in Montana, and lots and lots of forest.
- Idaho: lakes, pointed peaks, solitude.

RIDER OVER THE NEZ PERCE

T By Margo Aragon

he few existing photographs of Jackson Sundown, the first Indian to become champion of the world famous Pendleton (Oregon) Round-Up, show a handsome, photogenic Nimiipuu/Nez Perce bronc rider, whose image still captures our imaginations. His long braids hang down over an athlete's physique. A wide forehead, brown eyes that could radiate familiarity or hostility, high cheekbones, a sharp nose. His abdomen, waist and hips are impossibly slim, like

OPPOSITE: *Standing proud—Jackson Sundown, wearing western cowboy attire, poses for a photograph, circa 1920.*

BELOW: *The original saddle Sundown won at the 1916 Pendleton Round-Up.*

a strong boy's. In almost all of the photos and film images we see him riding or having just ridden; focused, friendly, strong, sure of himself, and displaying his astonishing way with horses. He poses in fashionable loose shirts and shaggy angora chaps. Compared to images of other bronc riders during the same competitions, Jackson looks sophisticated and smooth. He has style and that unmistakable air of cool.

This is the legend that has evolved from one man, one horse, and one day in 1916 at the Pendleton Round-Up: Jackson Sundown was already the best bronc rider in the western United States. Not just the best Indian rider. Sundown was the best rider. Period. And, in his late 40s or early 50s, he was older than all the other com-

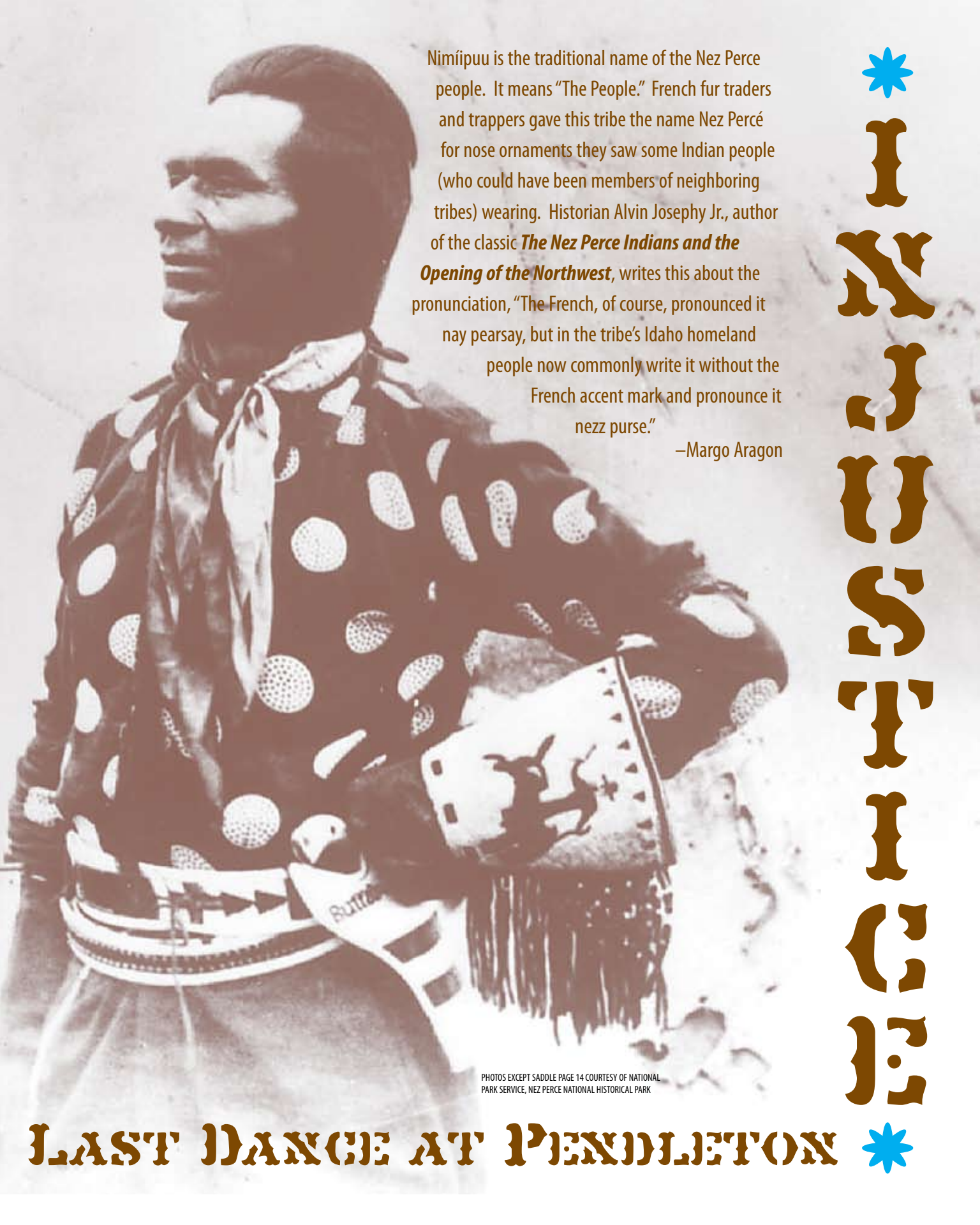


PHOTO COURTESY OF DEAN WILSON

petitors. He rode his mounts to a standstill. And there were already stories about how those mounts never bucked again after Jackson rode them. He should have won the Pendleton Round-Up a few years earlier, but racism kept him from the highest prize. Then, something in the 1916 crowd, the thirty thousand fans who showed up in the September heat, connected with the Indian man who rode a fiery horse named Angel. The legend says Jackson Sundown rode Angel like nothing they had ever seen before. The horse tried every move. He fish-tailed high and came down hard, twisting in strange and powerful ways. And Jackson hung on with style and grace and uncanny control. When the ride was over and before the arena dust had settled, the crowd erupted into an ear-splitting roar. They yelled and whistled and stomped the bleachers with their feet. Jackson was their champion. They wanted him. In that long and glorious moment, they wanted the Indian man to win. The legend says the judges feared a riot if they didn't give Jackson what he should have received a few years earlier. By popular demand, with a crowd vote that transcended race, Jackson Sundown won. Now he is legendary.

Almost ninety years later, Jackson is more popular than when he won the championship at age 50. Or was it 53? Or was he perhaps his late 40s? Details about Jackson Sundown's birth are sketchy. Some accounts say he was born in 1863 in Montana as his family went to steal horses from the Flathead people. Other stories say he was born in Idaho, at Jacques Spur, near Culdesac.

A NEZ PERCE COWBOY'S



Nimípuu is the traditional name of the Nez Perce people. It means “The People.” French fur traders and trappers gave this tribe the name Nez Percé for nose ornaments they saw some Indian people (who could have been members of neighboring tribes) wearing. Historian Alvin Josephy Jr., author of the classic *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, writes this about the pronunciation, “The French, of course, pronounced it nay pearsay, but in the tribe’s Idaho homeland people now commonly write it without the French accent mark and pronounce it nezz purse.”

—Margo Aragon

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PHOTOS EXCEPT SADDLE PAGE 14 COURTESY OF NATIONAL
PARK SERVICE, NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

LAST DANCE AT PENDLETON

Mylie Lawyer, a Nez Perce/Sioux elder, remembers Jackson Sundown. That's because Jackson, and his second wife, Cecelia Wapshela Sundown, visited Mylie's family quite often, arriving by horse and buggy at their home in Lapwai.

BELOW: Jackson Sundown with his daughter, Teresa James, in this undated photograph.

OPPOSITE: Sundown in Lapwai, 1918.

Now age 92, Mylie says, "I can remember him as being a tall man, real muscular: a strong man. He wore long hair and he had that [Nez Perce] forelock. He was a handsome man." She also recalls Jackson Sundown as being younger than her father,

who was born in 1877, the year war broke out between the United States and the nontreaty Nez Perce. That would have made Jackson age 30-something when he competed, a far cry from being in his early 50s. Conflicting stories are often told about people who are known for extraordinary accomplishments. That's part of becoming a legend. No one really knows for sure, and by the time a person attains the status of a legend, the only people who could verify one's entry into legendary status, are all gone.

Sundown's Indian name is variously spelled Waaya-tonah-teosits-kahn or Wetas Tenia Naka

it's possible that Jackson acquired more than one Nez Perce name—which was customary with the older, more traditional people.

Jackson and his second wife, Cecelia Wapshela Sundown, visited Mylie's family frequently, arriving by horse and buggy. Whenever the Sundowns needed groceries, or had to visit Lapwai from Culdesac, they stopped at the Lawyers' home. "Sometimes they'd eat supper with us and sometimes they wouldn't, but they'd always sit and visit. I can remember [Jackson Sundown] telling stories about what he would do with the horses," Mylie recalls.

Jackson mainly spoke in the Nez Perce language. And Corbett, Mylie's father, would translate from Nez Perce to English for his daughter.

"He said [Jackson Sundown] always liked the real mean horses," Mylie recounts. "And I said, 'What did he do to them?' He said he talked Indian to them and (would) pat them and press them on different places, and pretty soon he'd be on them bareback."

There's an oral story among some of the Nez Perce that Jackson Sundown's *weyakin*, his personal power, was the horsefly, and that's what allowed him to ride a horse so well. It would also explain

THERE'S AN ORAL STORY AMONG SOME OF THE NEZ PERCE THAT JACKSON SUNDOWN'S WEYAKIN, HIS PERSONAL POWER, WAS THE HORSEFLY, AND THAT'S WHAT ALLOWED HIM TO RIDE A HORSE SO WELL.



Pykt. Since Nimiipuu/Nez Perce names are like titles to stories, direct translations from Nez Perce to English are impossible. Whoever gave Jackson Sundown his Indian name would have had some idea, or person, or story in mind, when giving the name. Also,

his horse-whisperer style of breaking horses.

Mylie Lawyer says that Jackson told her father that the first time he went to the Pendleton Round-Up, he didn't know there would be bucking contests. "He said that was the first time he ever saw it. I asked Dad 'What did he do?' and he said his [Jackson's] first thought was, 'I can do that.'"

Men routinely gathered just outside the Lawyers' home and told stories, which is traditionally how Nez Perce people conveyed information. A group of people would sit, for hours



or days, and listen to each other speak. Mylie recalls, "They'd all come and sit on our front porch and (pluck) their whiskers, and talk Indian, and tell stories. And their gestures, the way they'd move their hands, and the way their voices would rise and fall, their inflections and the imitations of animals. They could imitate coyote or they'd tell about the different birds. And then when they'd tell about the war they'd go like this (sound of fist hitting open palm of the other hand) and that meant gunshot. And I learned that right away."

Just as there are conflicting stories about Sundown's birth year and place, there are as many differing stories about whether he was in the War of 1877, or not. *American Cowboys*, a video written and produced by Cedric and Tania Wildbill, includes some great interviews. Nez Perce historian Otis Halfmoon says a passed-down story in the tribe describes a young Jackson Sundown's rescue by a United States soldier at the Big Hole Battle in Montana. Dr. Steve Evans, a retired Nez Perce History professor at Lewis-Clark State College, says his research shows

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Sundown would have been too young to participate as a warrior. Mylie Lawyer says she never heard a story about Jackson Sundown being in the war.

The War of 1877 has also been called the Nez Perce War, even though the conflict was

between the United States government and the nontreaty faction of the Nimiipuu/Nez Perce people. Historian Alvin Josephy Jr. points out that only about one-third of the Nimiipuu/Nez Perce, roughly six hundred people—most of them women, children, and old men—formed the group that wanted to continue their traditional way of life and native belief system. That Nez Perce

faction differed from the “treaty” Indians who accepted Christianity and moved within the reservation boundaries that had been designated for them. Long-standing disputes, thefts, and murders led to the beginning of a series of battles that culminated in the famous surrender speech by one of the greatest

Nimiipuu/Nez Perce chiefs, Chief Joseph: “. . . From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.” At the end of the war, 418 people—184 women, 147 children, and 87 men—survived, and were taken as prisoners.

Some of the survivors of the 1877 war may have been at Pendleton in 1911 to watch their favorite horseman. An international crowd gathered at the Pendleton Roundup that year, just one year after the official opening in 1910.

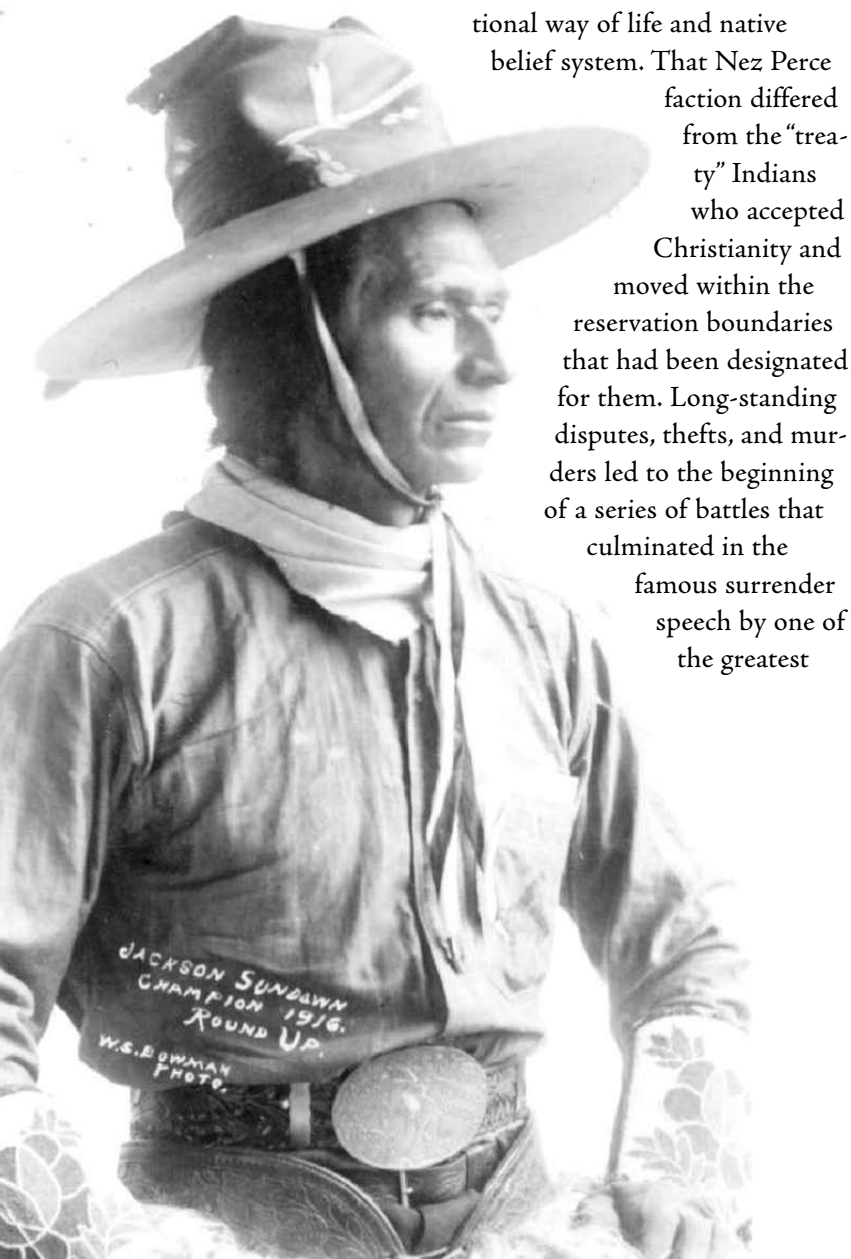
Thousands arrived by buggy and train. Many camped out at the box office just to get a ticket. The three men who competed for the 1911 championship were Jackson Sundown, probably in his 40s, George Fletcher, a 21-year-old black rider and cowboy, who had grown up in the Umatilla Tribe, and John Spain, a 25-year-old white rider who was quite talented. Film footage shows a judge who didn’t get out of Jackson’s way as he rode a horse called Lightfoot. They collided, sending Jackson right off his horse, shaken but not broken. Fletcher’s ride was golden. Spain’s ride was a bit controversial. Spain won.

The 1912 Grangeville Border Days became another outlet for Sundown’s natural abilities, and his uncanny gift for breaking horses and bulls. That September was the first organized version of Border Days. Stories passed down by oral tradition in Grangeville still describe the amazing way Sundown accepted an invitation to ride a wild bronc that no one else wanted to ride.

A 1990 *Lewiston Morning Tribune* story about Jackson Sundown, however, reported a different version from eyewitness Frank Gillett, a member of the Grangeville Cowboy Band: “On the first day a local cowboy tried to ride the bull ... he went to the hospital and was there six months. On the second day ... Sundown was to ride the bull, and he did.” Gillett described how Sundown was “sitting clear over one side, then on the other side, then on top.” In a ride that wowed the spectators and competing cowboys, Sundown, most likely through interpreters, later said, according to Gillett’s paraphrase, “that after the third jump he was completely blind, riding the rest of the way by force of habit.” Gillett

BELOW: Jackson Sundown soon after his historic bronc riding victory at the Pendleton Round-Up, 1916. Photograph from the Thomas Morhouse Collection.

OPPOSITE: Sundown winning at Pendleton, 1916.

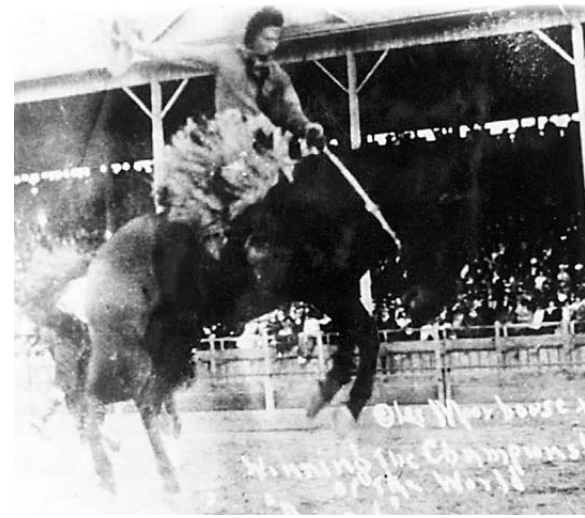


said the bull never bucked again.

By 1915 Sundown had had enough of competitions. He was getting older, yet many riders refused to compete against him because his skills were so far beyond anyone else's. How many more times would Jackson have to ride to prove himself? Maybe his time to shine would never come. Jackson announced his retirement after receiving a best showing of only third place. The Pendleton Round-Up championship still eluded him.

The United States of America in 1916 was a place where Indian people couldn't vote. In fact, they weren't

down in the Durant to Pendleton just to watch Jackson Sundown ride. I was little ... Lots of people! And they had that big parade with all those Indians in their beautiful [rega-



...MANY RIDERS REFUSED TO COMPETE AGAINST HIM BECAUSE HIS SKILLS WERE SO FAR BEYOND ANYONE ELSE'S. HOW MANY MORE TIMES WOULD JACKSON HAVE TO RIDE TO PROVE HIMSELF? MAYBE HIS TIME TO SHINE WOULD NEVER COME.

considered citizens until Congress passed the Citizenship Act of 1924—which gave Indian people voting rights. In 1916, the Nez Perce Tribe had not yet been allowed to self-create their government. That wouldn't happen until 1948. Reservation life was still new; a bitter reminder of how much Indian people's lives in the western U.S. had changed. They couldn't easily travel to buffalo country in Montana to hunt and trade. The Wallowas, traditional homeland to the Joseph Band of Nimiipuu were still off limits to their own people. Their language, culture, beliefs, and way of life were restricted, monitored and controlled. The warrior tradition was ending.

Yet the intensely competitive nature of the Nimiipuu people was very much alive. It still revealed itself during traditional gambling games like stick game and horse races. They often played and raced until there was nothing left to lose. When organized athletic events like baseball and rodeos sponsored by white men began allowing Indian men to compete, the deeply ingrained tradition of showing one's skill flared again. With Jackson Sundown, it was a torch.

Mylie Lawyer was about four years old when her family made the long drive to Pendleton in 1916 to watch their friend compete. "I can remember we went

lia]. Lots of foreigners. We saw Japanese and other strange people around. And it was crowded. I remember him [Jackson] in the parade."

Jackson was talked into one more ride. In 1916, he drew a big bay horse named Angel. With number 109 pinned to the back of his shirt, Jackson Sundown gripped his mount with his left hand and extended his right hand, just holding his hat, braids flying, dust rising. The East Oregonian newspaper said the "crowd cheered to a frenzy ..." The late Phil Lane, a Sioux cowboy and horseman recalls the crowd would not be denied their champion. With some people plucking boards from the bleachers and stomping. The judges knew it was time to state the obvious. Jackson Sundown was the first Indian to be declared world champion.

In 1972, Jackson Sundown was inducted into the Pendleton Round-Up Hall of Fame. And in 1976, he was inducted into the Rodeo Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, making him the only Indian with that distinction.

With Horace Axtell, Lewiston resident Margo Aragon co-authored A Little Bit of Wisdom: Conversations With a Nez Perce Elder.

'Vacuum Brigade' Rallied to Open Ashley Inn

New Cascade hotel boasts mountain amenities

Story text and photos by Ellie McKinnon



ABOVE: Gazebo in the garden at the Ashley Inn, Cascade.

RIGHT INSET: A guest room at the Ashley Inn.



Small towns have their own brand of communication. And the final rush to complete the Ashley Inn at Cascade, in August 2003, was no secret to the town's residents. In fact, by then, the new business had become a something of a cause for many people in the Valley County community. At a nearby church, plans to help prepare for the inn's opening were underway. Three days before the opening, a vacuum brigade appeared at the doors of the hotel. Carrying their own vacuums and supplies, thirty-two

townspeople converged in the lobby asking only one thing: "Where do we begin?" It seemed that the whole town wanted the opening to be successful. And it was.

Ashley Inn owners Ashley and Katrin Thompson, now nearing retirement age, credited advice from a friend for giving them the impetus to start and complete a business project some might have deemed impossible.

"Attempt to do something so impossible," read the note of advice from the friend of the Thompsons, "that unless God is in it, it is doomed to failure." The Thompsons had taped the note to the bottom of their computer, and proceeded to do what might have seemed to some an impossible task: create the

Victorian-style hotel in Cascade.

It is easy to imagine a lovely bride descending Ashley Inn's elegant, curving, grand staircase to her handsome groom as music filters upward. Smiling guests look on from seats in a room ripe with color, blooming with flowers, and flooded with sparkling light from two stories of beveled glass. This storybook image was to become reality at the August 2003 opening, with nuptials marking the beginning of a marriage, and the opening of the inn. The Thompsons wanted the bridal party and their guests to enjoy every moment of their stay. But what is easy to imagine is not always easy to produce. Although a good deal rode on the success of the wedding event, time had been in short supply. In addition to the

would sit back to enjoy the glow. Then the fire would die.

The remote switches for the fireplaces had not been properly set, so when guests in one room lit their fireplace, the fireplace in the adjoining room responded by shutting off. Guests also discovered that something was wrong with the therapy tubs. A few minutes after being turned off, the air jets would re-start. The staff scrambled to respond to the odd malfunctions. They discovered that in the last minute rush, they had missed a couple of lines in the hot tub operations manuals. The therapy tubs were initially responding properly, but guests didn't know that ten minutes after emptying, the tubs were programmed to begin a self-cleaning

one event, Ron heard Ashley Thompson yelling and found him running wildly back and forth behind the inn, trying desperately to detour a curious skunk from exploring the facility. Ron joined the foray, but the terrified skunk tore past him, and dove into the crawl space below the hotel. Ron dispatched the animal permanently, but the skunk got the last word, dousing Ron and the inn with a full load of unwelcome scent.

A skunk in the crawl space was not a problem Lindquist had encountered in his Lewiston classroom, where he recently studied hotel and restaurant management. But problem solving is his game. Formerly the president of the Cascade Chamber of Commerce, a business owner, and an employee of the

Three days before the opening, a vacuum brigade appeared at the doors of the hotel. Carrying their own vacuums and supplies, thirty-two townspeople converged in the lobby asking only one thing: "Where do we begin?"

elegant lobby and adjoining areas, wedding guests had booked thirty-five of the sixty-seven guest rooms. Shortly before the wedding, none of the rooms were ready.

Vows were exchanged, the last toast was raised, the music faded into memory, and guests retired to their rooms. They lit the remote-controlled gas fireplaces that grace the guest rooms, and settled into deep soothing waters of therapy tubs. Shortly, the front desk phone began to ring.

Guests reported that their fireplaces would not stay lit. Once lit, guests

would sit back to enjoy the glow. Then the fire would die. cycle. Despite the problems, the guests were good-natured and laughed about "ghosts" as the staff corrected problems, and explained the "malfunctions" in both the therapy tubs and fireplaces. It clearly wasn't a perfect takeoff, but the inn was successfully launched.

Manager Ron Lindquist breathed a huge sigh of relief. He was concerned about a particular "ghost" returning. During the construction phase of the inn, the innkeepers had hosted open houses. Interested Cascade residents and potential guests were apprised of progress on the hotel. The night before

Boise Cascade lumber mill, Ron was absorbing the shock of the mill's closure when his friends, Ashley and Katrin Thompson, owners of the Water's Edge RV Park, called to discuss their idea of creating a destination inn in Cascade. Would Ron be interested in becoming the manager?

With financial assistance through the North American Free Trade Agreement, Ron, at age 47, began a college career at Lewis-Clark State College. At LCSC, Lindquist studied four days a week, returning the other three days of the week to Cascade to

work on the inn's construction. Later, two of his sons joined him, and pursued degrees of their own. Ron explains, "I graduated with a 4.0 [grade point average], but got more than a diploma. My sons married two of my classmates, so I acquired a degree and two daughters-in-laws as well."

Meanwhile, the Thompsons worked to give wings to their dreams and imagination. With the closure of the lumber mill, the town's chief economic engine was silenced, and the economy sputtered. Convinced the inn would help revitalize the region, the Thompsons appeared before the Idaho Rural Economic Development Council where they guaranteed the creation of

gathering place known as Kirby Field. This field had been the site of circus tents, baseball and football games, and picnics. The field was dedicated to Lieutenant Paul Kirby, a navy pilot on the USS Vincennes, who was the first serviceman from Valley County-Cascade killed in action in World War II. Assuming that Kirby would have wanted to see good things happen in his hometown, the Thompsons strove to continue his legacy at the hotel.

Gardens on the hotel grounds were planned to eventually be dedicated to Kirby's memory and recorded in the United States Congressional Record. Plans for a traditional, rustic, Idaho-style wood and stone lodge

Accompanied by workers pounding and sawing, this guest wandered from room to room, and up the stairs to the second floor, intrigued by the chirping smoke detectors that had not yet been equipped with batteries. One day workers found the guest enthralled. She had followed the chirping to a guest room where mirrors were stored and was surrounded not only by the chirping, but by her own image. She was in turkey heaven. Once the batteries were installed in the detectors, the guest, a turkey hen, disappeared.

The inn was taking shape, and Ashley, also the general contractor, stuck with his self-imposed mandate to hire locally whenever possible. A steam

When overwhelmed, Ashley says he retreats to the [guest] journals and finds therein the reasons for continuing.

several jobs. The pressure was on. Ashley had to get private financing showing that the inn would be a viable project before the council could secure grant funding to expand the city's sewer system. The entire Thompson family sold or mortgaged their property to collect the needed funds. The USDA became involved in the effort to enhance Valley County's economy. And then, Farmers and Merchants State Bank, seeing Cascade's potential, provided necessary financial backing for the hotel. Townspeople gathered for meetings where the Thompsons described their vision and sought to secure the confidence of local residents. The Thompsons secured a hotel site on the grounds of a former community

were replaced by a new design that would make the inn stand out. The new design grew from images of the English countryside, and assumed a Victorian flavor.

The Thompsons, who were interested in architecture, had visited many hotels around the U.S. and gained an affinity for California's Del Coronado, with its grand staircase. Why not a little of that elegance in Cascade? Corner pins were set and construction on the facility began.

When an electrician installed the fire alarm system, an unusual guest began visiting the site daily. She walked among the big equipment paving the parking lot, showing no fear, so strong was that draw to the building.

box installed in the lobby enabled Donnelly craftsman, George Guarino, to build the grand curved staircase onsite. Ashley sketched the design of the mantel on the drywall around the fireplace in the lobby, and Guarino used that drawing to craft the custom mantel. Katrin and Ashley consulted with numerous professional hotel designers as they considered options for the guest rooms and interior spaces.

Wanting their hotel to carry the stamp of their twelve-year-old dream, rather than the mark of a designer, Katrin and Ashley recalled the welcoming warmth of the homes of several friends. They decided they would ask each friend if they would design the interior of one guest room. Each



design could be replicated several times at the hotel. They first made their request to friend Karen Hendrickson, a former antique store owner and home designer who understood the elegance the Thompsons hoped to achieve.

Hendrickson responded with several vignettes that delighted the Thompsons. They decided it would be wonderful if Hendrickson would design the interior of all the rooms. She agreed. And soon Karen and Katrin began selecting, ordering, and arranging upholstery, wallpaper, furnishings, and window coverings for the entire inn. They used Idaho-made products whenever possible. Dedicated to beauty and detail, Hendrickson selected and arranged for matting and framing of six-hundred different prints, and found unique and pleasing furnishings, including four-poster beds for the guest rooms. Unhappy with the carpeting she found available, Hendrickson designed a pattern, and

had it woven especially for the inn. Katrin laments that, "We did not know we were asking for nine months of her life and she didn't know she would be giving so much time to the project, but we had a great time doing this." The resulting sense of warmth, hospitality, and beauty reflect the value of the effort.

At times, the dream seemed too much. Being near retirement age, the Thompsons, pondered whether the personal price was worth the effort. Still, as the pace quickened, adrenaline surged, and finally the doors opened to a full spectrum of guests eager to celebrate anniversaries, honeymoons, and many other occasions. The staff—local residents—served up smiles and added informal concierge service to their responsibilities. Housekeepers and front desk workers knew which country road would provide a pastoral scene, complete with newborn colts. The cooks, while providing hearty country breakfasts, could also tell guests where to find wild mushrooms

A Cascade community amenity, the tour train depot behind the Ashley Inn, is easily accessible to guests.

and huckleberries. Journals placed in each guest room became repositories of positive reactions and energy-generating comments. When overwhelmed, Ashley says he retreats to the journals and finds therein the reasons for continuing.

The future looks bright for the inn. The owners already have business connections with the Tamarack four-season resort—currently under development on West Mountain, at Lake Cascade. The pleasures of Lake Cascade, and nearby McCall, are easily accessible, as is golfing on courses nestled in the shadow of magnificent mountains, rafting trips on the Payette River, and hiking on countless trails. Someday, the hotel owners expect to have a full service spa. Even so, amenities are already available. A beautiful bright red diesel calls guests to the "Thunder Mountain Excursion Train" at the brand-new depot just behind the inn. Hotel guests may board the train and tour the area (with a box lunch from the hotel), travel to and from river rafting excursions, witness a staged Wild West shootout, or test their investigative skills in an on-board murder mystery. Set in splendid mountain scenery, the region offers a smorgasbord of activities for which Ashley Inn fills an inviting and unique complement. What may have seemed an impossible dream, has become reality.

Ellie McKinnon lives in Boise.

Never Underestimate Darby Canyon

A snowshoeing and skiing adventure in the Targhee National Forest

Story text and photos by Shawna Andreasen

Darby Canyon may be unfamiliar to many people, but the Targhee National Forest winter playground has plenty of name recognition among cross-country skiers and snowshoe enthusiasts.

Part of the 116,535-acre Jedediah Smith Wilderness, Darby Canyon—situated southeast of Driggs—is a beautifully wild place, full of opportunities for sightseeing, exercising, and adventure.

Still, as personal experience sometimes reminds us, human beings should never underestimate Mother Nature, and should plan accordingly for rugged conditions—especially in the dead of winter.

We thought about Darby Canyon as we loaded our equipment into the car, and the sky gave signs of early morning in the east. My husband, Damon Andreasen, and good friend Kendall Jex, were my traveling

Majestic approach: The massive Darby Canyon Wind Cave, and a waterfall below it, are seen from a distance as the intrepid snowshoers trudge on. Damon Andreasen pictured in the foreground; Kendall Jex in the distance.



companions that day. Both are great choices for wilderness traveling companions, because they both know how to survive in primitive areas. And fortunately, they know how to prepare for a fun winter journey.

First, we stopped at the Teton Basin Ranger District station a few miles from our destination. There we

Darby Canyon.

Despite planning, however, the way to our destination soon became somewhat confusing.

"Where do I turn?" Damon asked.

"Uh, I think there's a sign up here somewhere," Kendall responded.

I had a feeling this was how the rest of the trip was going to go.

our off-road efforts earlier than expected, turning this experience into an unforgettable physical endeavor. A planned journey on the road now became—under the terms dictated by this contingency of nature—a journey through the wilderness.

We strapped on our cross-country skis and backpacks, and went three

Darby Canyon, situated southeast of Driggs, is a beautiful wilderness full of opportunities for sightseeing, exercising, and adventure.

picked up an avalanche report for the day and some advice from local residents on exploring the area. Our main objective was to reach, and explore, the Wind Caves at the end of

We eventually found the right turn, and made our way until the road turned into a massive snow blockage. The road, in fact, was closed. We ended up having to begin

miles before the sun was fully up. We soon came to a sign that said, "Darby Canyon trailhead four miles."

"Four miles!" Damon said, in an exasperated tone.

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outdoor winter adventure

We began to form a game plan. We set 3 p.m. as a turn-around time. That meant that if we didn't make it to the cave by then, we were turning back.

On we went, quoting our favorite movies, talking about crazy relatives, and trying not to fall over from the weight of our packs. I was fortunate not to have to carry a climbing rope or harness, which we were going to use to explore the caves.

We stopped every ten to fifteen minutes for a rest. I looked at the beauty around me as the boys trekked off into the unseen wilderness to make their yellow snow.

Soon after they returned, Damon pointed out an elk up on a hillside. The growl of a distant bear broke our fixation, and we kicked into high gear.

Needless to say, the conversation stopped, and our imaginations started. Every time we saw skat on the trail, or foreign animal tracks, we wondered, "could this stride be my last?" Of course, imaginations can get carried away and soon we were back to our normal pace.

It was fun to pass fellow nature lovers. We said our "hellos" as we passed small families and their dogs.

After two hours of skiing we made it to the trailhead. From there it was 3.4 miles uphill to the cave at Darby Canyon. We hid our skis and

strapped on our snowshoes to unknowingly begin the most strenuous part of our expedition.

The snow was about knee-deep. And except for an aged and snowy snowmobile track, we had to blaze our own trail. The incline increased as we pressed forward. The forest was quiet.

By now we could see the other side of the steep canyon walls. We took turns cutting trail. One hour went by, and then two, and three.

We finally came into a clearing, and what we had been seeking was within sight, on the western wall of the canyon. That sight was a dark

v-shaped hole in the earth, with a frozen waterfall right below it.

With our destination now in sight, we pressed on with greater excitement. We had to pack down the now-deeper snow with our feet, until we came to the base of the waterfall at 2:30 p.m. The incline to the cave was very steep and looked dangerous—too dangerous to risk. We were at about nine-thousand feet and avalanches were possible on the steep inclines surrounding the cave.

Our adventure had to stop here, but we vowed to return sometime soon. The whole experience was still

Winter waterfall: Damon Andreasen, left, Shawna Andreasen, and Kendall Jex at the base of a frozen waterfall in Darby Canyon, after a rugged six-hour journey from Driggs.



fulfilling because the waterfall was awesome enough to see. The water had frozen into a lustrous blue column, something I had never seen before. Small clumps of snow periodically fell from the top of the waterfall,

we reached the car. We had to get out of our snowshoeing mode and back into the flow of kick and glide. The motivation of the doughnuts back at the car, and our lighter packs, carried us through the first four miles.

didn't talk, we just giggled with the knowledge that we had actually just accomplished twenty-plus miles in one day. It wasn't Mount Everest, but it sure felt like it to us. We ate doughnuts until we got to the Trails End

Our adventure had to stop here, but we vowed to return sometime soon. The whole experience was still fulfilling, because the waterfall was awesome enough to see. The water had frozen into a lustrous blue column, something I had never seen before.

causing a snowy mist in the air.

We ate lunch, including the tastiest apple I've ever had, and headed back.

This was definitely a different experience. You see, I had never skied on snowshoes before. We each had our own techniques for going down the mountain. I leaned back on the tails of the snowshoes and used my poles for support as we glided down the face. We descended in one hour, compared to the three hours it took going up.

Once we got back to the trailhead we had seven more miles to go until

We stopped at the halfway point, with guts aching for a rest. Kendall was scavenging through his backpack and then he stopped and said, "Carrots, sweet carrots!" He had forgotten that he had packed them. We shared the carrots, took a couple swallows of Gatorade, and were on our way again.

Having a new energy about us, we emerged from the canyon into valley terrain. The last stretch to the car seemed to take forever. When we reached the car, we collapsed with cramped legs and sore feet. We really

Café in Teton, where we splurged on cowboy burgers and milkshakes. It was all worth it.

It's important to remember to always take precautions when going out into unknown territory, as we did. When traveling remote areas of Idaho, it's critical to travel in a group, always telling someone where you're going and when you plan to return. You can get avalanche reports, bear precautions, and other safety tips online from the Targhee National Forest web site.

Shawna Andreasen lives in Parker.



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Faculty-Built

Brainpower put to practical use during construction of Moscow's University Heights neighborhood

By Julie R. Monroe

In 1949, the Bill and McGee Parish family was one of several University of Idaho faculty families residing at West Sixth Street's Veteran's Village in Moscow. The Parish's upstairs apartment, shared with four-year-old son Robb, and three-month-old daughter Susan, measured a grand total of four hundred square feet. The modest dwelling was heated by a wood range; one that also served for cooking. And the tiny apartment was frigid in winter, sweltering in summer, and surrounded by mud in spring. Still, it was one of just two family housing options that Moscow-based University of Idaho had to offer its faculty.

Confronting the Parish family, like millions of American baby boom-era families, was the wearisome post-World War II problem of a severe housing shortage. And, thanks largely to record enrollments at the university, where Bill Parish taught electrical engineering, the Moscow housing mar-

RIGHT: House-building professors, circa 1950, take a break from building what would soon be the "Malcolm House" family residence.

OPPOSITE: Ground is broken for the Bill and McGee Parish family home in June 1950. From left: Robb Parish, McGee Parish, Tom Riley, Frank Junk, Max Jensen (on tractor) and Ted Norgard.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL AND MCGEE PARISH

ket had failed to provide relief for that undersupply.

And even though the university had developed South Hill Homes, a complex of twenty-five temporary housing units constructed for faculty immediately after the war, the demand for affordable family housing still exceeded the supply. So persistent was the shortage that the university even allowed faculty

approximately forty University of Idaho professors, calling themselves the “Faculty Housing Group,” decided to build their own houses. What’s more, they decided to build a housing development—an entire neighborhood of family homes. And they would do the work themselves. That none of them had ever built a house before seemed inconsequential, considering the lack of alterna-

tives. Besides, the men reasoned, by pooling their individual resources, they would make up what was lacking in experience. Together, they had the tools to deal with any question.

To answer the question of where to locate the development,

dairy husbandry professor and corporation secretary Richard Ross, was a reference to the development’s location on a ridge about two hundred feet above the area surrounding it.

In February 1950, Walenta convened the first meeting of the board of directors of University Heights, Inc. At the inaugural meeting, the directors granted Walenta authority for the general management of the corporation and established nine standing committees to oversee the business of building the neighborhood. Those committees included: Incorporation and Finance, Site, Sewage and Water Systems, Architecture, Mechanical-Electrical, Lot Improvements, Community Relations, Construction, and Purchasing.

That same month, Walenta purchased the two properties selected for



PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL AND MCGEE PARISH

...a characteristically American solution to a shared problem. A group of approximately forty University of Idaho professors, calling themselves the “Faculty Housing Group,” decided to build their own houses.

to reside in its temporary student apartments, known locally as “Vet’s Villages.” By 1949, however, with the university strongly encouraging faculty to leave student housing, and with real estate vacancies in the community of Moscow as rare as a windless day on the wheatland hills of the Palouse, there seemed few alternatives for faculty families.

Under such desperate circumstances, it is understandable how an idea, originating as a casual remark made among commiserating faculty, developed into a characteristically American solution to a shared problem. A group of

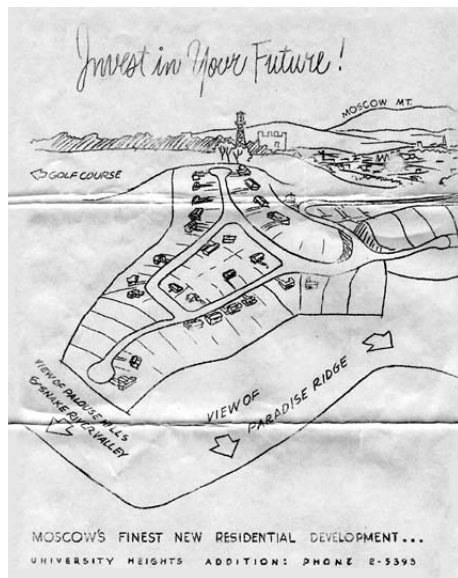
several of the engineers in the group, including Bill Parish, began surveying farmland near the Moscow university campus. By October 1949, they had found what Bill describes as “a premier site”: two plots of farmland immediately south of the water tank located on the southwest perimeter of the campus. Then, law professor Thomas Walenta assumed responsibility for administering the development, which he structured as a nonprofit cooperative corporation. The nonprofit group was incorporated in the State of Idaho as University Heights, Inc. The name, suggested by

the development, and during the spring of 1950 planning moved forward under the rules of the corporation. The group established an annual membership fee of \$100. One half of the membership assessment was due at the time of election. Also set was the formula for determining each member’s obligation for the cost of construction materials, which the corporation would buy in bulk volume. The members agreed to submit their house plans to the Architecture Committee, chaired by architecture professor Clayton Page, for approval. Furthermore, the thorny issue of how to

moscow do-it-yourselfers

equitably determine who would get which lot was resolved.

The order of choice of lots, the members decided, should be determined by chance, with each member drawing capsules containing numbers



the university's civil engineering department, completed the design of the site, and as early as April 1950, bulldozers began reshaping the former wheat field into sixty suburban house lots. Organized into five blocks, the lots measured either 80 feet-by-125 feet or 100 feet-by 100 feet, and were typically 10,000 square feet in size. They ranged in price from \$300 to \$1,800, with an average of \$1,000.

The first lot in the new neighborhood to be excavated was that of Bill and McGee Parish. Before excavation began, however, Bill and McGee had creatively overcome a problem that other members of the neighborhood also faced. Bill recalls that commercial credit was difficult to obtain at the time, "before the G.I. Bill of Rights forced banks to lend," he says. In response to the scarcity of credit, the Parishes, and another fac-

and gave them the other \$2,000 they had promised.

During the spring and summer, as carpenters raised high the roof beams, the corporation oversaw the construction of the subdivision's infrastructure. Streets, complete with wood-burned signs and four-foot wide sidewalks, were graded and built; water, sewer, and lighting systems were installed. And on November 1, 1950, the family of accounting professor Willard Wilde became the first to occupy Moscow's newest neighborhood. So eager was the Wilde family to take ownership of its new house that they moved in before the electricians could finish stringing the wires in the walls.

During the next year, membership in the corporation expanded to forty-eight. And nearly thirty houses were built. Just as cooperation and mutual benefit had characterized the concep-

"All hell broke loose," remembers Bill when the semi-truck carrying everything from kitchen stoves to freezers to cabinets arrived at the Consolidated Freightways depot in Moscow.

ranging from one to forty-two, the latter being the total number of corporate stakeholders. By choosing this method, the members agreed to assume the risk of not getting one of the more desirable lots on the perimeter of the development. An exception, however, was made for Thomas Walenta; he was given first choice of lots in recognition of his service to the corporation.

As the nonprofit corporation members came to consensus on procedural matters, Chester Moore, head of

ulty family, civil engineering professor Frank Junk, and his wife Peggy, agreed to finance the construction of each other's homes. First, each family contributed \$2,000 toward the cost of building the Parish home, and on June 10, 1950, Bill began excavating the ground for the Parish home on lot 8, block 5, of the addition. Then after Bill and McGee's house was partially built, and a local commercial lender agreed to finance the balance, the Parishes repaid the loan from the Junk family,

tion of University Heights, so were those qualities present in the construction of the neighborhood. For example, Bill and McGee recall when neighbor Malcolm Hause, who was taking a break from building his family's house to help Frank Junk stain the roof of his new house, lost his grip on the roof and slid four feet to the ground, breaking his wrist. Once the Parishes and others learned that Malcolm would be unable to work on his house for several days, they all pitched in to ensure that

construction was not interrupted.

In addition to sharing the occasional emergency construction project, the members of University Heights, also shared the cost advantages resulting from high-volume purchasing. One of the corporation's original standing committees, purchasing, was responsible for coordinating the bulk purchase of a variety of materials at substantial discounts. Members made payments directly to the corporation, which in turn, paid the vendors. The range of goods purchased through the corporation was astounding: furniture, furnishings, electric equipment, garden and lawn equipment, nursery stock

OPPOSITE: Cover of a sales brochure promoting Moscow's University Heights Neighborhood, circa 1950.

BELOW: The Bill and McGee Parish home under construction in Moscow's University Heights Neighborhood, 1950. Bill and some University of Idaho colleagues poured the foundation, and built the house themselves.

(including 2,000 roses to be used as plantings around the perimeter of the subdivision), seed, fertilizer, maintenance supplies, and heating oil.

The Parishes recall the day in 1951 when items purchased from the General Electric Corporation were delivered. "All hell broke loose," remembers Bill when the semi-truck carrying everything from kitchen stoves to freezers to cabinets arrived at the Consolidated Freightways depot in Moscow. (The deep freeze Bill and McGee received that day is still in use). In 1957, the corporation opened an account with a Spokane dry good company to supply its members with a variety of household items, including carpet, appliances, and furniture, at prices well below retail.

While membership in University Heights, Inc., had its benefits, it also had its obligations. In 1953, the corporation divided the membership into three work teams to tackle "projects to be done which require some time and

effort and which are for the mutual benefit of all," according to an April newsletter. The corporation also expected its members to help sell vacant lots in the development. To assist them, a mimeographed sales brochure extolling the advantages of purchasing one of the "beautiful and inexpensive" lots in the neighborhood was prepared. It would take several years, but by 1960 all sixty lots in the first addition, as well as nine more in a second, would be sold.

At the midpoint of the 20th Century, with memories of a raging world war still vivid, a group of University of Idaho faculty families built their own neighborhood from the ground up. Through the diversity of their expertise, and with industriousness and resourcefulness, they had the means—if not individually, then collectively—to build, not simply a neighborhood, but their own futures as well.

Julie R. Monroe lives in Moscow.





CENTER SPREAD: *The old schoolhouse at Idaho City, constructed in 1892.*

PHOTO BY ARTHUR HART



IDAHO TERRITORY BOOM TOWN

WILL RICH IDAHO CITY MINING HISTORY PAN OUT?

By Arthur Hart

It seems hard to believe today, but little old Idaho City, built during a mid-19th Century gold rush, was once the largest town in the Idaho Territory. For a few weeks in 1863, when the mining town's population topped six thousand, Idaho City even surpassed Portland, Oregon, as the largest city in the Pacific Northwest.

Now, the population of Idaho City, the Boise County seat, is 458 (2000 U.S. Census figure). During its heyday in the 1800s and first part of the 20th Century, Idaho City served as the municipal hub of the eighteen-square-mile Boise Basin. In the basin, an estimated \$100 million-plus worth of gold was mined in the first eight decades after the initial discovery of the precious commodity there in 1862. Idaho City's population actually dwindled to 164 in 1970, a count that could have lent the impression that Idaho City was on the verge of extinction.

Far from being a ghost town, however, Idaho City is arguably a thriving tourist attraction where visitors can see more historic buildings from before 1870 than in any other place in Idaho.

Despite disastrous fires that swept through Idaho City in May, 1865, and again in May, 1867, destroying hundreds of buildings, some of the most important structures have survived.

Visitors can see the 1865 Masonic Hall, possibly the only one of its kind still in use west of the Mississippi River, the 1867 St. Joseph's Catholic Church, the Miner's Exchange Saloon of 1865, and Boise Basin Historical Museum—in an 1867 brick building that was once a post office. The Boise County Courthouse, built in 1873, still serves its original purpose.

The original buildings had been constructed mainly of wood. "The town realized [during the 1860s] that the whole thing went up in smoke," said John Bertram, a Boise-based city planner whose firm prepared a modern plan for Idaho City in 1985. "And they started building brick buildings."

Still, there's more to Idaho City than its historic architecture. Much more.

WIDESPREAD 19TH CENTURY DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE CHINESE ALSO SURFACED IN IDAHO CITY

Despite suffering much discrimination during the 19th Century, Chinese laborers once provided the backbone of Idaho City's gold mining work force, and they were active in other businesses within town. The Pon Yam House, once the home of Idaho City's leading Chinese merchant and Chinese community leader, is being restored as a museum. Extensive archaeology has uncovered an impressive array of artifacts that are on display.

Although Bertram views Idaho City as a place that still has vast untapped tourism industry potential, Idaho City leaders in modern times have sought still to make the town's rich history pan out to some extent.

"Idaho City still has a ways to go to capture the essence of that early period, and still kind of enhance the visitor experience," said Bertram, who suggested improving marketing and increasing historic restoration projects.



PHOTO COURTESY IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



PHOTO BY ARTHUR HART

Perhaps there's plenty of room for improvement. Whatever the case, however, there currently exists interesting background material to study, and an Old West mining boom town aura to absorb when visiting Idaho City—located slightly more than twenty miles northeast of Boise on winding State Highway 21. Developed by Bertram's planning and urban design company (known as Planmakers), Rupert Thorne Park, a modest visitors center park at the state highway and downtown Idaho City, provides one solid general source of information on the town born during the Old West pioneer era.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOISE BASIN HISTORICAL MUSEUM



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: *A photographic look at the Idaho City Masonic Hall, built in 1865, and a 19th Century view of Idaho City's Miner's Exchange Saloon—built the same year as the hall.*

OPPOSITE: *Constructed in 1873, the Boise County Courthouse, located in downtown Idaho City, still serves as the county courthouse.*

A SKETCH OF IDAHO CITY'S EARLY HISTORY

Boise Basin's riches were discovered on August 2, 1862, when a party of prospectors from Florence and Auburn, Oregon, found gold on Boston Bar, near the future site of Centerville. The initial discovery group, although commonly called the Grimes party, was really composed of three prospecting parties that had joined forces to explore the basin in the summer of 1862. The leader of one band was Moses Splawn, who had mined at Florence and Elk City. D.H. Fogus led another, and George Grimes a third. Some of the prospectors had traveled from Walla Walla, Washington. The three bands got together in the Owyhee country, crossed a flooding Snake River with some difficulty, and struck out for Boise Basin. Fearing attack by the numerous Shoshoni Indians who lived in Boise Valley, they proceeded cautiously up the river to Boise Canyon, then followed a

northern ridge that led them into the basin.

Moses Splawn's interest in the area had been aroused by a Bannock Indian who, uncharacteristically, took the white man's mania for gold seriously enough to suggest that if the "yellow metal" was that important, they could find it in abundance in the Boise Basin.

On August 9, 1862, George Grimes was shot during an ambush and killed. As historian Merle Wells pointed out in his classic *Gold Camps and Silver Cities*: "Although a strong tradition persists in Boise Basin that the Indians had nothing to do with the shooting, those who returned to Walla Walla credited the incident to a disaffected Bannock or Shoshoni. In any event, Grimes was hastily buried in a prospect hole, and his men hurried back to the Boise River . . ." (Grimes Creek and Grimes Pass were later named in honor of the unfortunate prospector, and a monument was erected at the spot where he was buried.)

Idaho City (first called Bannock City or West Bannock) was started in October 1862, when larger and well-supplied parties returned from Walla Walla. Reports of some placer claims yielding as much as \$200 a day per man reached Lewiston, Walla Walla, and Portland, leading to a mad rush to the remote Boise Basin where trails were virtually undeveloped, and roads for wheeled vehicles were nonexistent. A more serious difficulty was the fact that winter was coming on. Deep snows and frozen streams would make life miserable, and placer mining impossible.

As in every gold rush, there were men inadequately prepared, either physically or mentally, to endure the hardships. Some came without the supplies, or the money, to see them through the mountain winter. Many who hoped to find work to earn their keep were disappointed. The large numbers attracted to Idaho in the spring of 1863 included sober, industrious miners who knew what they were doing, but also scoundrels and adventurers who came to prey on others, and a large number of men without the skills or the capital to stick it out. Small wonder, then, that the basin's spectacular inrush of people in 1863 and 1864 was followed by a period of stabilization when most of the disappointed fortune hunters drifted away to other excitements, or went back to their former homes.

On March 4, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation that established the Idaho Territory out of what had been the eastern part of Washington Territory. By that fall, Idaho City was the center of population in the new territory with 6,275 inhabitants. Placerville had 3,254, Centerville, 2,638, Pioneer City, 2,743, and Granite Creek about 1,500. Never since have these communities come close to the numbers they had in 1863. By 1870, when the first federal cen-

sus of Idaho was taken, Idaho City's population had declined to only 889, Pioneer City's to 477, Centerville's to 474, Placerville's to 318, and Granite Creek's to 299. Buena Vista Bar, included in the 1863 estimate with Idaho City, was counted at 880 in 1870, but the combined total for the two (1,769) was less than a third of 1863's population.

Between 1862 and 1890, life in Boise Basin centered on the same concerns as life today: work, play, love, marriage, family, birth, illness, and death. There was more violence, less adequate medicine, more physical discomfort, and fewer educational opportunities. Transportation and communication were primitive at best. Politics were even more partisan than they are today, believe it or not, and newspaper editors more opinionated and scathing in their attacks on editorial rivals. Much of what they wrote could not be printed today.

Ethnic groups were more distinctive and unassimilated. And one group, the Chinese, outnumbered American-born residents of the basin by a wide margin. Women were a very small minority in all basin communities, with all of the attendant social consequences. Children and family life were enjoyed by only a few of the thousands of men in mining communities.



PHOTO COURTESY IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



OPPOSITE: *The Boise County Jail doubled as Idaho's territorial penitentiary until 1872, when most prisoners were transferred to a new prison in Boise. A portion of this historic structure in Idaho City can still be seen.*

ABOVE: *Centerville Road, at Idaho City. Photograph taken in 1920.*

All miners were not ignorant and rough, as is sometimes suggested. They came from a wide variety of backgrounds and from many lands, and, if not yet used to American culture, they were well-versed in their own. One white observer found the Chinese, for example, "not only intelligent but educated," and added, "I have yet to see one who is unable to read and write." Other national groups brought special talents and interests to basin life, notably the German with musical skills, and the Irish with their humor and "gift of gab."

A few Boise Basin pioneers brought capital with which to invest in mines or business, but most had to work hard to develop their own mining claims, or to go to work for others to provide the basic necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. Some prospered with special skills or trades the community needed. Saloonkeepers outnumbered all other businessmen.

In the 1870 census, most women listed were "Keeping House," but there were a few who ran businesses or worked for wages. Jane Emerson, age 35, lived alone with an eight-year-old son, and took in washing and ironing for work. Four women were dressmakers, and Bridget

Foye, an Irishwoman, age 37, with three small children, ran a hotel. Her 33-year-old husband was a miner. Julia McAuliff, also Irish, taught school. Jemima Neville, age 39, a native of Virginia, took in boarders, as did Margaret Buckley, an Irishwoman whose two teen-age daughters waited on tables. Ah Hong, age 25, was Mrs. Buckley's Chinese cook. Four young German women danced for a living in a Granite Creek hurdy-gurdy house. Although three women were employed in James Davidson's Placerville hotel, the cooks were all Chinese. Six women in the basin were listed as prostitutes, but there were probably more, since not all were willing to disclose their true occupations. The Chinese played a significant part in the history of Boise Basin. When the 1870 federal census was taken, 1,751 of Boise County's people were Chinese—more than forty-five percent of the total population. By 1880 the area's declining mining economy had reduced the total count to 1,970, but 1,125 of them were Chinese—well over sixty percent. A writer in the *Capital Chronicle* of Boise recalled in 1869 that a Chinese agent named Billy Hy had obtained permission in the summer of 1865 "to purchase mining ground, and the privilege of peaceable mining was granted by white miners to the Chinese." This observer dated the beginning of Chinese placer mining on More's Creek to August, 1865, several weeks before the *World*, Idaho City's newspaper, noticed it. He said that by December there were about 150 Chinese in Idaho City and vicinity, and that Chinese gambling houses and brothels had been opened.

That some Chinese in the basin were laundrymen before they were able to start mining in the summer of 1865, is indicated by George Owens' 1864 business directory. Owens listed Hop Ching, Quong Hing, Fan Hop, Sam Lee, and Son Lee as operating laundries in Idaho City. This competition was hard on the Boise Basin's laundresses, several of whom were widows.

By November, 1865, the Chinese presence in the basin was significant. "Their celestial countenances begin to adorn every portion of the terrestrial scene," wrote the *World*, "... Almost every day they are spilled out of wagons like so much general merchandise." The number of Chinese in the mines of the basin had probably reached a thousand by 1867. The camps now had Chinatowns and Chinese merchants who imported a wide variety of goods from the Orient. Well-financed

Chinese companies had bought up many of the older placer claims and were reworking them. White mine owners also began hiring the Chinese, at wages substantially lower than they had to pay white miners.

This was viewed with disgust by most of the older inhabitants, and an already strong anti-Chinese sentiment grew in bitterness. The *Idaho Tri-weekly Statesman* said, "We hear but one remark about Idaho City, and that is 'The Chinamen have got it.' There is no use grumbling about the Johns any more, for they are evidently not going to stop until the Boise County mines are all worked over again." The *World* thought "Idaho has already more than enough of Chinamen. Our mines ought to be worked by white men. Coolies will ruin any mining country they flock to ... "Harassment of the docile and hard-working Orientals became a common feature of life in Boise Basin. Chinese "washed claims which the white man had abandoned as paid out, and were satisfied with profits of two or three dollars a day," recalled Thomas Donaldson. "They worked more hours than any miners I ever saw and, poor souls, were often the victims of Christian (?) extortion and discriminations ... Resistance to white men was the last thing a Chinaman dared."

Washing particles of gold out of sand and gravel took lots of water, and when streams froze in winter, placer mining came to a halt. In June, 1864, a visitor to the basin mines wrote: "The mines are being

worked by night as well as by day. On account of the scarcity of water, it becomes necessary to use it at all times, and as many times over as possible. It is rather delightful to step out late in the evening, and view the light of a hundred fires that shine on every side, to light the miner in his search for gold."

By 1870, Idaho City's population had dwindled to 889 from 1863's peak of 6,275, but there were still productive mines well into the 20th Century. By 1942, more than \$100 million worth of gold had been produced, and gold dredges were still working the streams well into the 1950s.

Bertram noted that the Chinese workers began to settle into the town in larger numbers following the initial Idaho City gold rush. "By 1870, the luster had passed," Bertram said, observing that the "easy gold" on the stream bed, had by then been extracted. Dredge, or placer mining, of the nearby streams then became the accepted method of mining. "By 1871, the big percentage of the miners in Idaho City were Chinese," added Bertram, who described the Chinese as "industrious ... [and] often discriminated against."

Heavily promoting the Pon Yam House—a structure owned by the Boise Basin Historical Society—would be one way to draw academic and general attention to modern Idaho City, according to Bertram, who also talked about a recent archaeology dig that unearthed Chinese artifacts.

"We should be sending a dig-nitary to China to find out where Pon Yam is buried," Bertram said.

While underlining to some of the city's untapped economic potential, however, Bertram took a balanced look at the development challenges the Idaho City Chamber of Commerce and city leaders face.

LEFT: *Idaho City Cemetery.*

OPPOSITE: *Chinese artifacts on display at Idaho City.*



PHOTO CREDIT



"There's a lot of opportunities and there's a lot of missed opportunities," Bertram said. "It all comes back to management, to me. It's hard for small towns to figure out how to do this. And that's the challenge, I guess. Most of our rural communities in Idaho are underfunded."

Somewhat of a Boise bedroom community, modern Idaho City, like many Pacific Northwest towns, felt the economic crunch that was created in the second half of the 20th Century by declining fortunes in the mining and timber industries.

Still, a wealthy historic heritage remains. If you haven't visited Idaho City, you have missed one the state's most colorful and historic places. It is an Idaho treasure. For more information about Idaho City's attractions, lodgings, shops, and special events, readers may use the Internet to call up: <http://www.idahocitychamber.com/historicalmaps.html>

Arthur Hart is director emeritus of the Idaho State Historical Society.

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FEBRUARY	19	19th ANNUAL IDAHO CITY CHILI COOK-OFF
APRIL	16-17	SPRING FLING (MELODRAMA)
MAY	ALL MONTH	HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH
	30	MEMORIAL DAY, HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPENS FOR THE SUMMER
JULY	4	FOURTH OF JULY PARADE AND FIREWORKS
AUGUST	7	ANNUAL OLD FASHIONED FAMILY PICNIC
	13-14	GOLD DISCOVERY DAYS (MELODRAMA, MUSIC)
OCTOBER	8-9	OCTOBERFEST (MELODRAMA, MUSIC)
DECEMBER	3	ANNUAL MAKE A WISH AUCTION & MUSIC

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Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth

Glenns Ferry school teaches pupils how to treat equine dental problems

Story text and photos by Kelly Kast

Horse dentures? Equine dental technology hasn't advanced to that point yet. Even so, for people interested in ensuring their horses have great choppers, another option is available: the Academy of Equine Dentistry in Glenns Ferry.

"Our goal at the academy is to provide comfort for the horse, longevity of teeth, proper mastication, and enhanced performance," said academy founder Dale Jeffries. "What does all that mean? If your horse feels good it can perform the way you want it to."

Jeffries founded the academy twenty-four years ago in Waverly, Nebraska. He opened the Glenns Ferry school just ten years ago. The academy's success has already been

RIGHT: Students at the Academy of Equine Dentistry in Glenns Ferry help horses with troublesome teeth.

OPPOSITE: The three-student teams at the equine dentistry school each consist of first and second level students, and an advanced or instructor-level student.





Our goal is not only to help the horse, but to educate and help horse owners understand how important dental care for their horses really is.

noted worldwide.

Raised on a farm in Nebraska, Jeffries has known since his youth he wanted to help horses. Realizing he couldn't help every horse that needed it, he decided instead to find a way to teach people how to help horses. His success is in the numbers. The academy currently teaches about one hundred students per year. Over the course of its twenty-four years in existence, the academy has graduated more than one thousand students.

"It was a little slow on the start because we had so much to learn ourselves," Jeffries said. "The idea that dental equilibration in horses is very important, however, is nothing new. This science is well over one

hundred years old, but we've taken it much further. Our goal is not only to help the horse, but to educate and help horse owners understand how important dental care for their horses really is."

What areas does it cover, specifically?

"For instance, mastication," Jeffries said. "If a horse's teeth are in good shape, owners save a fortune on feed over the course of the horse's life. Safety is another issue. I personally know of three people who have been killed by horses flipping over backwards because of teeth pain."

The Glenns Ferry Academy holds four sessions a year. The courses are conducted in February,

May, August, and November.

I visited the academy during the November session.

When I arrived I expected to find the academy housed in a state-of-the-art, modern facility complete with sterilized "hospital type" cubicles for both the horses and the dental students. I was surprised to find the academy in what appeared to be a converted warehouse.

That's not to say the school isn't state-of-the-art. It is. Even so, the facility is definitely "horse friendly."

Metal fencing divides the large, individual horse stalls. And

each stall floor is covered with a thick, clean layer of straw. Each stall is large enough for a level one student, a level two student, and an instructor.

It also struck me how calm and quiet the facility is, given the nature of its business.

"In the past, we tried putting the horses in tighter stalls, but horses aren't comfortable when they're confined," Jeffries said. "We want the horses and our students to be as comfortable as possible. Creating a quiet atmosphere is important because horses tend to 'act out' more when they're nervous."

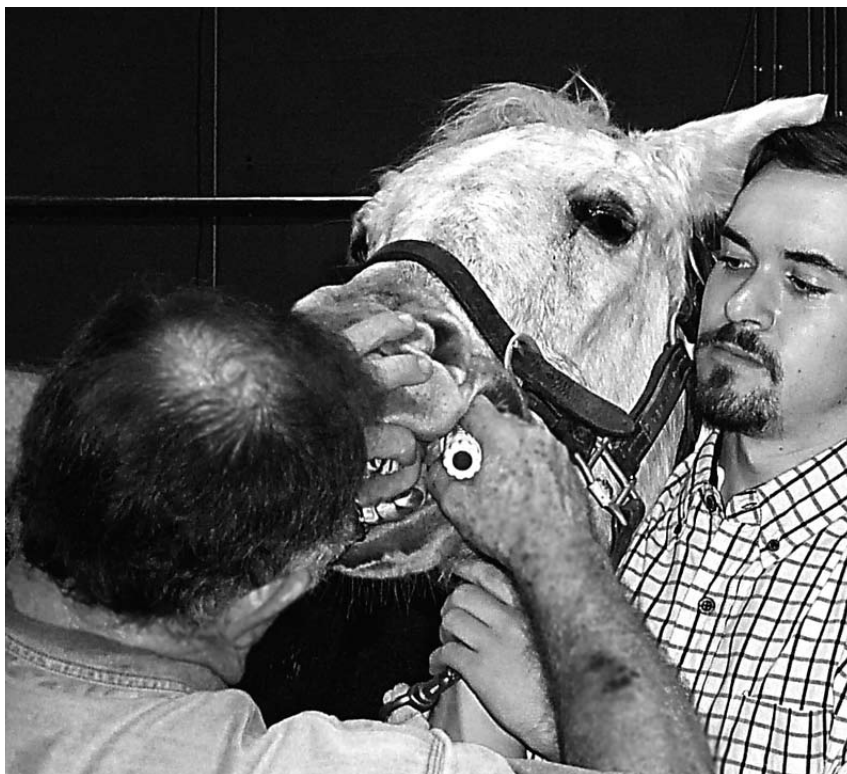
Students from all over the world attend the academy. I had the

equine dentistry

Specially-designed tools used in the Glenns Ferry equine dentistry school are also made in the town—at World Wide Equine, Inc.

opportunity to interview Chris Edmonds, an advanced student from Spain, and Craig Shoemirk of Australia, who now instructs at the academy and is an instructor at the Glenns Ferry school's franchise facility in Australia. Edmonds says he came to the Glenns Ferry school because, "it's the best place in the world to learn horse dentistry."

"A horse can have any number of dental problems from sharp teeth to molar ramps, or a combination of problems," Edmonds explained. "If these problems are addressed and taken care of, it can



This course is for people who really love horses, and for horse owners who want to take the very best care of their animals.

add years to the horse's life as well as enhance the horse's ability to perform and receive proper nutrition by being able to eat right."

Added Shoemirk: "Whether your horse is a pet or a working animal, the better care you give it, the more you're going to get out of it. Every horse has different dental needs. The academy addresses all of those needs and teaches both the student and owner how best to take care of them."

I was given a tour of the facility and "talked through" the course instruction by Bert Lambert, an

instructor and graduate of the academy.

Lambert explained that each horse first receives a dental evaluation, and the owner of the horse is advised what procedures are needed.

"We feel it's important to educate the owners about what we're doing and why," Lambert said. "We also allow the owners to watch the proceedings."

One of the horses being worked on during my visit needed to have retained caps removed. A retained cap is a tooth that is still present after it should be shed. This problem would be similar to a human

retaining baby teeth after the permanent teeth have come in.

At the academy, the caps were extracted to allow the permanent tooth to grow out completely, and to prevent misalignments of the horse's teeth.

Once the evaluation is made, the horse is sedated by one of the staff veterinarians. If necessary, X-rays of the horse's mouth are taken.

"Depending on the extent of work to be done, procedures can take from a few minutes to two or three hours," Lambert explained. "On the average we spend about two hours with the horse."

The equipment used by students was specially designed for horse dentistry by World Wide Equine, Inc. An affiliate of the academy, World Wide Equine is also based in Glenns Ferry. World Wide Equine, also founded by Jeffries, sends dentistry tools to more than sixty countries worldwide.

"In the past, dentistry tools for horses were quite poor and hard on the horse," Lambert said. "These tools are designed for specific procedures by master dentists and master instrument makers, and the tools are

The specially-designed tools used at the School of Equine Dentistry in Glenns Ferry are created by master equine dentists.

improved as information is improved or needs change."

Along with participating in the evaluation process, horse owners are invited to attend a PowerPoint presentation given by Lambert.

"The presentation teaches owners about the basic anatomy of a horse's mouth and provides in-depth information on various dental problems a horse can have and how an equine dentist would address those problems," he said. "We also explain the effect the dental work can have on the horse. For instance, a horse may not be able to eat for one or two days after a procedure. Part of the reason for this is because the horse doesn't understand why it no lon-

ger has a problem and it basically has to learn to eat again."

The tour concluded with a glance at the more than three hundred horse skulls the academy uses for teaching purposes.

"This course is for people who really love horses, and for horse owners who want to take the very best care of their animals," Lambert said. "There is some controversy with veterinarians about whether or not equine dentists should also be licensed veterinarians, or at least supervised by veterinarians. I work on many, many horses. My practice covers much of the West. I know how much a good dental plan can help horses."

Kelly Kast lives in Bliss.



A Family Store Tradition

Almo general store rich in memories, oldtime aura

Story text and photos by Lisa Dayley

Armour's Dairy Cleaner, Tanlac Stomachic Tonic, and Thedford's Velvo Laxative. Reflecting the buying patterns of a far different era, those old-time consumer product names adorn the shelves of Tracy's General Store—in the tiny southern Cassia County village of Almo. Just by looking at those three products at the hill country store—at the edge of the Sawtooth National Forest—customers may start to catch a nostalgic glimpse of late 19th Century

life in southern Idaho.

At the Almo store, owned by the husband-and-wife business team of Bill and Phyllis Tracy, the throwback theme extends beyond the cleaning and medicinal products. The Tracys also decorate with an old Coca-Cola sign, an Almo Milling Company flour sack, and the store's original cash register. It wasn't until February 2004 that the quaint cash register was replaced with a 21st Century device.

As to the old register's func-

tionality, it seems that one hundred years, or so, was all the use the dated machine could bear.

"It got to where the old one wasn't recording right," Phyllis said. Even so, the displayed antique cash register combines with the old-time products to pay homage to the store's history, and gives visitors a look into Almo's past.

So, let the historic tour begin:

In 1883, Bill Tracy's grandfather, Utahan William Eames, and his brother Harry Eames, also from Utah, went on a hunting trip to nearby Almo. They liked the community so much they eventually returned to open a store.

Almo, located forty-five miles south of Burley on the Idaho-Utah border, gave the Eames brothers a chance to make a living. Opening the facility also allowed the men to consolidate the commodities trading enterprise they were already

LEFT: Dianne Tracy (left) and her mother, Phyllis, in front of the 111-year-old Almo store.

OPPOSITE: The classic "Coke Time" sign lends an air of nostalgia to Tracy's General Store at Almo.





under the Homestead Act, and the Eames brothers took advantage of the opportunity. In 1894, the two brothers homesteaded 160 acres, where they built a one-room log cabin they aptly named the Eames General Store.

Why that location?

"The [Almo] valley looked like a nice place to homestead," Phyllis Tracy said, simply.

Throughout the years, the Eames brothers took turns managing the business. And in 1940, William's daughter Otella and her

Just by looking at those . . . products at the hill country store . . . customers may start to catch a nostalgic glimpse of late 19th Century life in southern Idaho.

operating with merchants at the neighboring railroad stop in now-defunct Terrace, Utah.

"They took butter, eggs, and potatoes, and hauled it over to the railroad," Phyllis Tracy said. "They would trade the [Utah] commodi-

ties for whatever the people in the Almo Valley needed. I'm not sure how the transactions took place, but after a while they said 'We'd be better off if we built a store.'"

At the time, the United States government was giving away land

husband Joseph E. Tracy, purchased the store. The couple's son, Bert, eventually took over, and twenty-three years later, Bill and Phyllis Tracy assumed management of the business.

The Tracys built a cinderblock



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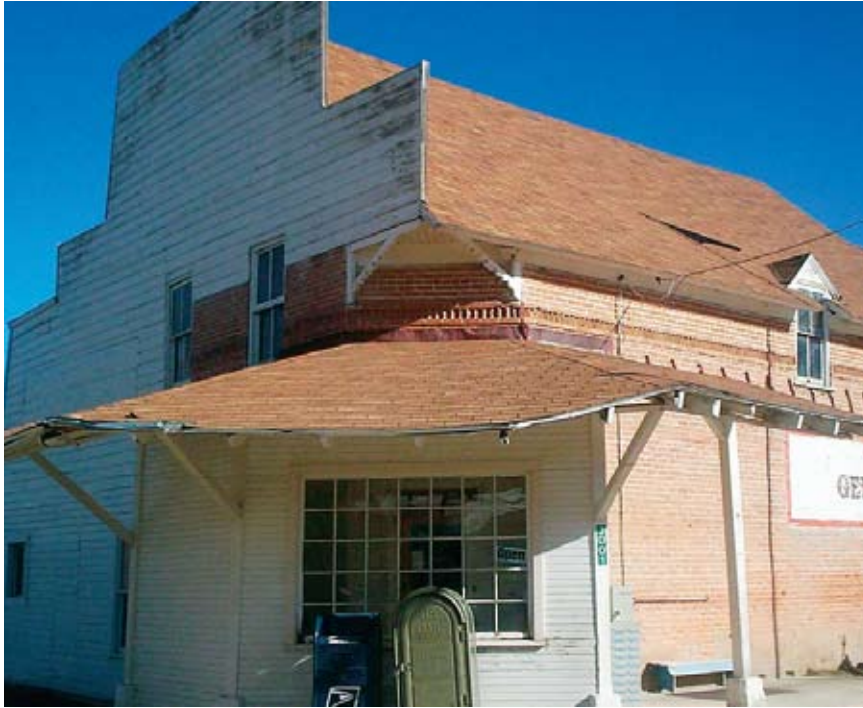
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The Tracy's General Store in Almo is a third-generation family business that has been open since 1894.

addition, which included a dining room, restrooms, showers, and a storage room.

Fast-forward to 2005, and the store marks 111 years of business.

Shoppers can find film, candy bars, and potato chips next to the Armour's Dairy Cleaner, Tanlac Stomachic Tonic, and Thedford's Velvo Laxative.

The store gets the majority of its business during the spring and summer months thanks to the influx of climbers visiting the neighboring City of Rocks. Climbers from Russia to Scotland to New Zealand have visited the store.

"It's interesting," Phyllis said, while



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claiming that it's difficult to tell the New Zealanders and the British apart. Even so, Phyllis noted that she immediately recognizes the Germans and Australians.

A world-class German climber who starred in Sylvester Stallone's movie *Cliff Hanger* once scaled the rocks at the park. "He was here for a week," Phyllis Tracy said. "I fixed breakfast for him and his friends."

Swedish climbers visited the store a few years ago and noticed the European designs on the facility's exterior.

During one memorable dance Eames escorted an inebriated dancer out of the building.

"One of the men caused a rum-pus in the dance hall, and William asked him to leave several times," Phyllis said. "He wouldn't go, so Grandfather Eames hauled off and hit him. It didn't hurt him too much. I think the man was too drunk to notice."

Married for more than fifty years, Bill and Phyllis Tracy started their married life in the same house William Eames built for his new

payment," she said. The animal was butchered and the meat sold in Pocatello.

While William let his patrons charge their groceries during the economic tough times, mainly in the 1930s, many of those debts were never collected.

"We have a whole box full of credit books that were never paid," Phyllis Tracy said. "William just let it go. He felt that if they didn't have the money, there wasn't any way for them to pay it. He didn't push them for payment. He was a good man."

Shoppers can find film, candy bars, and potato chips next to the Armour's Dairy Cleaner, Tanlac Stomachic Tonic, and Thedford's Velvo Laxative.

"They recognized it immediately. They wanted to know who built the store," Phyllis said. "It has the same pattern they have seen in some of the older homes in Europe. They recognized it immediately."

In the early 20th Century, two Swedish builders visited Almo looking for work and were employed by the Eames family. "They hired them to add the brick addition and a dance hall upstairs," Phyllis noted.

The dance hall proved a popular hangout for residents.

The Eames family built stairs outside the building so dancers could have access to the upstairs without going through the store after-hours.

William Eames also served as the town marshal. In that capacity, he worked as a security guard at dances.

wife, Georgina King, whom he met after moving to Almo.

"It was the first shingled house in the valley," she said. "All the rest were made of adobe."

Because the Tracys' home had no running water at the time, they regularly visited William's place to get cleaned up.

During those visits William told about starting the store.

"He would tell me stories," Phyllis said. "I loved anything to do with history. It was so interesting to me how things were and what they did. I just loved to listen to him."

During those chats, William often talked about the Great Depression.

"When someone owed him and couldn't pay the bill, his customers would sometimes give him a calf in

She credits William's generosity and good business sense for keeping the store running. Because of his example, the family plans to continue operating the business.

The Tracys have six children, sixteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Nostalgia and sentimental reasons inspire the family to keep the store open.

Today Tracy's daughter, Dianne Tracy, helps to manage the store.

"That's probably the only reason my husband hangs on to it," Phyllis Tracy said. "It's a family tradition, and he doesn't want to let the family down. The children have deep feelings for the store. It was always ingrained in us to keep the store running and take care of it."

Lisa Dayley lives in Burley.



Catching the SNOWS

Story text and photos by Karen Bossick

ABOVE: *Tom Swanson buckles down his snowshoe before heading up the Johnstone Pass trail toward Pioneer Cabin.*

OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: *Connie Sickafoose snowshoes up a hillside in the Pioneer Mountains near Sun Valley.*

OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT: *Tom Swanson snowshoes near the east fork of the Big Wood River.*



a

t 6 a.m.—before the winter sun has even thought about peeking over the Pioneer Mountains—longtime Ketchum Realtor Jed Gray heads out to his garage. He carefully selects one of four pair of snowshoes hanging on the wall. He straps them to his feet and turns upwards on Sun Valley's famed Bald Mountain.



WONEN @ *Wave*

*Idaho Recreation Seekers Engage in Popular Sport,
Slave Off Cabin Fever*

He shuffles along in the early morning silence, passing lift operators getting ready to crank up the chairlifts for skiers who are still in bed. He watches the zig-zagging lights of snow groomers tilling the snow into rows of corduroy. And he feels the thrill of morning light beginning to arouse a sleeping world.

Gray finally comes to a stop 3,400 vertical feet later, taking in the morning sunrise as it illuminates a layer of puffy clouds smothering the Snake River Plain.

"It's just such a beautiful way to start the day," he says. "And it's good exercise, too—whether you're going up or down. It's a way to keep on hiking all year long. And it's as easy to do as walking—the only thing you need to know is a little bit about avalanche and snow safety."

Gray is among a growing

snow sports in America. Nearly six million Americans participated in the activity in 2003. And the number of people participating in snowshoeing grew by three hundred percent nationally in five years (1999-2003).

Idaho outdoor sports equipment retailers concur that the state's snowshoeing scene clearly mirrors that nationwide growth trend.

The Elephant's Perch in Ketchum, for instance, sold more snowshoes last year than touring cross-country skis.

"We thought that snowshoe sales would simmer down last year after five really big years," said Nappy Neaman, who co-manages The Elephant's Perch in Ketchum. "But people who viewed snowshoes with a wary eye ten years ago are now returning to the store to upgrade their snowshoes. And we have a constant influx of new people who real-

learning to ski."

Some, like Darrell Reed of Gimlet, like to stash a jug of wine and some cheese into their day packs and mosey out in the backcountry, keeping an eye out for the rounded tracks of a bobcat, or the telltale signs of otter sliding down the snow-covered embankments of creeks.

Others, like Gray, strap on a pair of snowshoes and jog up Baldy every morning as part of their fitness routine.

"I think snowshoeing is really a harder workout than cross-country skiing," said Terri Khoury, of Ketchum. "It's invigorating, plus you can go anywhere."

Today's snowshoes, which range in price from \$130 to \$250, are nothing like the hickory wooden snowshoes of olden times; footwear that looked like oversized tennis rackets, and forced wearers to waddle

Shorter and lighter, the modern snowshoes are so comfortable they're like walking in bedroom slippers, according to Elkhorn resident Susie Jones.

number of Idahoans who stave off cabin fever each winter by snowshoeing. From the Sandpoint area and Kellogg in the north, to McCall, to Idaho City, to the Sawtooth Mountains, to the Magic Valley, and places like Darby Canyon in the eastern part of the state, the national snowshoeing wave has caught on in Idaho.

As the Idaho reflection illustrates, snowshoeing has become one of the trendier and faster-growing

ize snowshoes are a way for them to continue hiking right into winter."

Chaz Savage, who manages the popular Galena Lodge Nordic Center north of Sun Valley, concurs: "We have sixty-five sets of snowshoes for rent and some weekends they all go out. Oftentimes we have a family group that comes up, and three or four go cross-country skiing, and the others will go snowshoeing. It's a good alternative because there's no skill involved, as there is with

like bow-legged cowpunchers.

Shorter and lighter, the modern snowshoes are so comfortable they're like walking in bedroom slippers, according to Elkhorn resident Susie Jones.

And the snowshoe models that came out this year are twenty percent lighter even than their counterparts of a few years ago, thanks to lighter aluminum frames and decking.

What's more, there are now narrower snowshoes designed specifically for women and their narrower,

shorter stride.

"They're narrow and tapered at the tail so you can walk naturally without being bowlegged," said Bruce Weber, a sales clerk for Backwoods Mountain Sports in Ketchum. "And their rocker—the way they curve at heel and toe like the bottom of a rocking chair—makes walking so much easier than the old flat snowshoes."

What's more, you don't have to worry about waxing them, as you do with skis. And you don't have nearly the cost involved with buying skis, boots, and poles.

If you really want to go light, you can discard the snowshoes for crampons, or even boots with retractable studs.

Atlas, for instance, makes a snowshoe crampon with plastic buckles that can be worn with any shoe or boot. They're perfect for hiking up hard-packed surfaces like Baldy, where there's no danger of post-holing in three feet of powder.

And the new line of IceBug shoes sport "smart studs" or tiny studs that jut out of rubber soles when necessary to dig into snow and ice. Step on concrete or asphalt and the studs retract.

Snowshoeing has become so popular in the Sun Valley area that the Blaine County Recreation District and Sun Valley Company maintain several snowshoe trails.

Employees go out after every snowstorm to pack down trails.

"It makes snowshoeing easier,"

Where to Snowshoe?

Snowshoeing at the sites listed below can undoubtedly be relatively cheap recreation. The snowshoeing sites are often free, or include minimal fees up to a few dollars. So, here's the short list of the prime snowshoeing places Idaho has to offer:

Schweitzer Ski Resort

This resort may be best known for its six-pack chairlift and stunning views of Lake Pend Oreille—when the fog lifts for you to see, that is. But this North Idaho ski resort, just eleven miles northwest of Sandpoint, is also home to twenty-five kilometers of snowshoe and Nordic trails winding through its glades near the base lodge.

Kellogg

The snow magnet of North Idaho is Silver Mountain near Kellogg. The area surrounding the ski resort offers plenty of roller coaster-type terrain winding through pine trees with occasional views of the valley down below.

McCall

A favorite snowshoeing area in this mountain resort town north of Boise is along Moonridge Road. Turn west at Deinhard Lane and drive one-half mile to Mission Road. Turn left on Mission and drive 1.6 miles to Moonridge Road. Then go six-tenths of a mile more, and start tromping.

Idaho City

You'll feel miles from the big city as you snowshoe through the Boise National Forest. A good starting point is the Whoop'Um Up Park'N'Ski parking lot 18 miles north of Idaho City on Highway 21. For parking, you need a Park'N'Ski sticker on your window.

Craters of the Moon National Monument

Enter another world, a world of weird sights and sounds, a world beyond the imagination, when you snowshoe the craters. Even in winter, the jagged aa, ropy pahoehoe and cinder cones in the 2,200-year-old lava fields provide a surreal scene.

The easiest snowshoe hike is along the seven-mile loop road, which remains unplowed during winter. Avoid snowshoeing on the actual lava, which is fragile.

Craters of the Moon National Monument is located along U.S. Highway 20 between Carey and Arco. Check in at the visitor center for suggestions, and other information to enhance your visit.

Pomerelle Ski Area

This snow magnet, 8,000 feet in the sky, is a natural for snowshoeing because of the powder dumps it gets.

For starters, head out in the cross-country ski area right above the rope tow.

Pomerelle can be reached by taking the Declo exit off Interstate 84 east of Burley. Head south on Highway 77 for twenty five miles, as it takes you through Albion and continue to follow signs to reach the ski area.

North of Ketchum

Billy's Bridge, a packed four-kilometer loop, sits just north of Russian John Guard Station across the road from Prairie Creek. To get there, drive about thirteen miles north of Sawtooth National Recreation Area headquarters on Highway 75. Watch for the brown recreation sign signed "Billy's Bridge."

Easley Peak in the hauntingly beautiful Boulder Mountain range dominates the views going out; Norton Peak provides the scenic vistas on the homeward bound trip.

North Fork—A 3.5-kilometer packed snowshoe trail, takes off behind Sawtooth National Recreation Area headquarters. To get there drive seven miles north of Ketchum along Highway 75 and turn right into the SNRA parking lot.

Take the kids into the visitor center for a look at the stuffed wolves, wolverines and other wildlife. Then try to spot them in the wild as you shuffle off on the trail.

There's no climbing involved whatsoever on this trail, which leads you north along the North Fork of the Big Wood River. Good thing, because the beauty of the hoarfrost sparkling under royal blue sky is enough to take your breath away.

said Savage. "You can tromp further in less time. And this way you don't have to worry about wandering into creeks or ravines or avalanche zones. We design our trails to take snowshoers along routes of scenic or historic interest—around the old pioneer cemetery, or up on a hill that ski tracks don't go. You get a sense of isolation you don't get on the ski trails."

That said, those who snowshoe regularly eventually get the hankering to get off the beaten trail to forge their own paths to destinations such as the Pioneer Cabin, a

popular summertime go-to just north of Sun Valley.

To this end, the Blaine County Recreation District and Sawtooth National Recreation Area offer guided snowshoe walks examining winter ecology. And two years ago, Ketchum's Environmental Resource Center started a snowshoe club—a loose-knit group bound together not by membership dues, but by phone numbers and e-mails.


Those who join the outings find that snowshoeing gives them a license to go places they can't go during summer because the snow covers

sagebrush and other obstacles that impede foot traffic during summer.

They also find that with the snowshoeing experience, streams take on a whole new look, covered as they are by marshmallow-like mounds of white. Glistening snow muffles sound, and the world seems somehow softer.

"They don't even seem like the same trails during winter," said Ketchum's Sandi Swanson. "It's really prettier in a lot of ways in winter than in summer."

Karen Bossick lives in Ketchum.



Ketchum resident Sandi Swanson enjoys a lunch spot with a view during a snowshoe hike in the Pioneer Mountains near Sun Valley.

...those who snowshoe regularly eventually get the hankering to get off the beaten trail to forge their own paths...

Get off on the right foot, but don't expect lots of mileage

Don't plan on putting on the miles while snowshoeing that you do on summer hikes. In deep snow, snowshoeing is a plod, at best. On hard pack snow it's still a bit of a duck walk.

But it's a good workout.

At two miles an hour, experts estimate you can burn 480 calories; at three miles per hour, you can burn 1,000.

Walking on snowshoes isn't difficult—it's basically a matter of putting one foot in front of the other. Here are a few tips to help you get off on the right foot:

- ◆ Use ski poles to help push off and take some weight off your legs, particularly when snowshoeing straight uphill. Poles also help with balance when going straight downhill.
- ◆ If walking on a mountain road, stay near the bank where the snow packs in.
- ◆ To climb a steep slope, kick the front of your snowshoe into the snow and press down to compact it into a step. Make sure each new step is sufficiently above the last one to avoid collapse.
- ◆ To descend keep your knees slightly bent, lean back and keep your weight on your heel cleats.
- ◆ The narrower and shorter the snowshoe, the less you'll have to change your normal walking gait. Taller, heavier people, however, need larger snowshoes than most people to keep from sinking into powder snow.
- ◆ Featherweight or lightweight snowshoes are the most comfortable for walking in the mountains of south-central Idaho.

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Ed Pulaski:

Inventor, North Idaho Firefighting Hero

By Dave Goins

"Towering flames burned conifer stands like prairie grass and came over the ridges, as one survivor recalled, with the sound of a thousand trains rushing over a thousand steel trestles. One ranger said simply, the mountains roared."

—From *Year of the Fires: The Story of the Great Fires of 1910*,
by Stephen J. Pyne
Published by Viking Penguin, 2001

During a mammoth fire more than ninety-four years ago, forest ranger Edward Pulaski combined the guts to lead a retreat at the right time with a working knowledge of the wilderness in North Idaho's Silver Valley. It was in the midst of the largest forest fire in United States history. It was no time for slipshod judgment and machismo actions. In guiding a crew of firefighters into an abandoned mining tunnel about three miles southwest of Wallace, Pulaski saved his own life, and an estimated thirty-nine others. Ringing true: the age-worn maxim that discretion *really* is the better part of valor.

The wrong attitude then would have been human arrogance in the face of nature, such as what was made evident by the tragic decision of the fishing boat's captain in the 2000 movie entitled *The Perfect Storm*.

Facing the brunt of the "Great Fires of 1910", which charred more than three million acres in the western United States, Pulaski the firefighting supervisor understood what constitutes foolish behavior for humans caught in the jaws of some natural

In the aftermath: At the primitive Nicholson Mine entrance, where Ed Pulaski and an estimated thirty-nine other firefighters survived the "Big Blowup" fire of 1910.



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who we are

conditions. Pulaski and his firefighting crew, in the early years of the U.S. Forest Service, were confronted with an outdoor inferno, commonly dubbed, the "Big Blowup" of August 20-21, 1910, that would claim the lives of more than six-dozen firefighters in the forests of North Idaho. The frenzied blaze had gained momentum from hurricane-force winds of up to eighty miles per hour, by some estimates. Many firefighters were trapped between Wallace and Avery. The ferocious, wind-fueled fire, that also torched large portions of western Montana, scorched vast acreages in the Coeur d'Alene and St. Joe national forests.

Ron Roizen, director of the Silver Valley-based Pulaski Trail Project—which aims to restore the escape area site, and eventually create an interpretive center—put that dire situation into perspective.

"The one thing that strikes me about that is the immense size of nature, compared to man," Roizen said. "It shows us truly how small we are in the face of a truly implacable natural foe—the fire."

Pulaski and his firefighting crew, in the early years of the U.S. Forest Service, were confronted with an outdoor inferno . . .

Roizen, who said that at least one million acres of North Idaho forestland were burned by the fire, noted that the gargantuan wind-driven blaze sent a large firebrand sailing over the town of Wallace. That firebrand landed in Wallace, and subsequently led to the destruction of a large portion of the town, a Silver Valley mining camp founded twenty-six years earlier. Wallace was saved from burning entirely when the wind shifted to the east, Roizen said.

Pulaski's move on August 20, 1910, allowed most of one crew (estimated by Roizen at forty-six men) to escape with their lives amid the firestorm. Exact counts are difficult to ascertain, because the public records were sketchy in those days.

One thing, at least, is certain: the raging fire had trapped Pulaski's firefighting crew on the West Fork of Placer Creek—now on the National Register of Historic Places.

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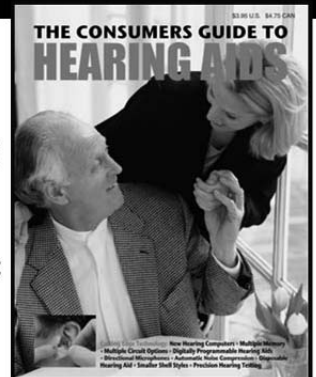
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So Pulaski directed the crew through the mountains, across a primitive, thicketed trail, and into the entrance at the Nicholson Mine, also next to Placer Creek. Pulaski's decision method wasn't a focus group. It wasn't a decision by committee. It wasn't an election. It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside Nicholson Mine at gunpoint to keep them from running out, into the fire. Ostensibly, that saved most of their lives. The crew was further endangered by wildfire when timbers at the mine entrance caught fire. What was Pulaski's response? According to the language of House Concurrent Resolution 39, (a tribute to the Pulaski's heroism, and promotion of the Pulaski Trail Project restoration effort) passed by the 2004 Idaho Legislature: "Pulaski beat out the flames with horse blankets and water

most with shoes burned off their feet; their clothes turned to scorched rags. "All of us were hurt or burned," wrote Pulaski, who later spent nearly two months in the hospital, suffering from blindness and pneumonia.

Pulaski's earlier decision to act, based on sound judgment and knowledge, was the pure act to survive. But even with Pulaski's quick thinking, not everyone lived to tell the tale.

Five men died in the mining tunnel. One man died in the woods, on the way to the tunnel. An educated estimate of forty, a number including Pulaski himself, survived.

Roizen reckons that the five men who died in the mining tunnel may have actually drowned, after passing out. Their deaths may have occurred during attempts to cool themselves down with pools of water inside the mining tunnel.

District counselor Jim See, president of the Pulaski Trail Project: "He did suffer some permanent damage to his eyes, and his breathing, and was never the same, which he never did get compensated for by the government, or the Forest Service."

In retrospect, See added about the Pulaski Trail Project: "And part of it, working with the Forest Service, is maybe to pay back a little bit of a debt they owe Pulaski. We've discussed that."

By most accounts, however, Pulaski was a reluctant hero, given little to talk about himself, let alone the issue of additional compensation for his heroic deed. It was the consensus among sources drawn on for this article that Pulaski, estimated to be in his early 40s at the time of the fire, only endured praise for his actions during the firestorm.

It was one leader doing the right thing. Pulaski held the crew inside Nicholson Mine at gunpoint to keep them from running out, into the fire.

from the mine floor that he gathered with his hat." Spent, both from battling the fire of now-mythic proportions, and the cumulative effects of the heat, smoke, and gas, members of the crew (including Pulaski himself) passed out—unconscious, in the tunnel. After having been mistaken for dead by a messenger who left the old mining tunnel in the middle of the night, according to Pyné's account, most woke up, early the next morning, August 21. They managed to stagger back to Wallace, by Pulaski's own account,

"Interestingly, it appears that the ones in the tunnel who died, actually died from drowning," Roizen said. "And I think that's a pretty good speculation."

Would they all have perished, if not for Pulaski's decisiveness?

"I think that's pretty certain," said Roizen, who has studied the infamous fire.

Even though Pulaski saved the day, as mentioned earlier, he definitely didn't escape the experience physically unscathed. Said Mullan School

"He never made much of a deal out of his heroic rescue of his crew," Roizen said. "He wrote about it only once, in 1923, when [*American Forests and Forest Life* magazine] actually held a contest, for forest rangers to tell about their most exciting experiences as forest rangers. At that point, from the sources that we have, Pulaski was still suffering infirmities from the 1910 fire, and owed medical bills."

Pulaski's wife, Emma Pulaski, had suggested that her husband enter an essay contest to recoup some of his



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An estimated two hundred houses were burned in eastern Wallace during the “Big Blowup” fire of August 1910. In this photo, soon after the historic blaze, the men near a wagon on the road work to clean up debris.

medical expenses. He did. And won \$500 for the essay entitled “Surrounded by Forest Fires,” that was published in the August 1923 edition of *American Forests* and *Forest Life* magazine. “I would guess that he actually penned it [the essay] himself,” Roizen said.

Despite his ongoing health problems, Pulaski invented a pick-ax device that firefighters have now used for decades. The dual-use invention came to be known as the “Pulaski Tool.”

And the legend grew.

Destiny, in the form of fame, seemed to descend on Pulaski, despite an austere personality that seemed to endorse obscurity. Somewhere along the way, he was lauded for his shirttail ancestry relationship to American

Revolutionary War hero Casimir Pulaski. The latter, a Polish emigrant, died in 1779 at the battle of Savannah, fighting against the British. After Edward Pulaski’s death on February 2, 1931, his widow, Emma Pulaski, acted to have the name: “Count Edward Pulaski”—chiseled on his gravestone at Coeur d’Alene’s Forest Cemetery.

And the legend grew some more.

The personality of Emma Pulaski was far different than her husband’s. “Apparently,” Roizen said, in an amused tone, “Emma . . . felt quite strongly that [Ed Pulaski] was from a noble Polish line, and [Emma] liked being called countess.” Roizen also talked about Emma Pulaski posing for a photograph, in formal attire, at the Nicholson Tunnel site. “She’s dressed almost like for an

Easter Sunday,” Roizen said. “It’s damn hard to get up there. How did that woman ever go a total of three miles, from Wallace to the mine, dressed like that?” Roizen’s conjecture was that Mrs. Pulaski likely had to have packed the formal clothing separately for the trek.

And Edward Pulaski, a low-key actor on the stage of life, content with simply doing his job, might well have been embarrassed by the clamor of the 2004 Idaho Legislature—the group that passed HCR39. The state legislative act followed the successful drive by U.S. Sen. Larry

Craig, R-Idaho, to bring home a \$297,000 federal appropriation for the Pulaski Trail Project. The state legislature’s legally non-binding resolution was twofold in purpose. One, it was a political tribute to Pulaski. HCR39 also expressed support for the government-financed Pulaski Project—an effort that supporters hope not only brings attention to the site of Pulaski’s heroics, but how modern firefighting practices have evolved. The heroic act itself, through the persona of Ed Pulaski, and the common culture, long ago took on a life of its own.

“It’s a little bit ironic that we want to highlight [Pulaski], given that he was pretty self-effacing,” Roizen said. “But you know, we like our heroes that way. We don’t like the ones that are bragging, and puffing their chests up. So, I think it’s quite fitting.”

Jim See corroborated Roizen’s view of the likely discomfort Pulaski’s

heroism brought him. Pulaski, a jack-of-all-trades in both Idaho and Montana, prior to becoming a forest ranger for the nascent U.S. Forest Service, was an unassuming but intelligent man assigned the role of hero.

"He was kind of a quiet man who would not like this whole idea of him as hero in this situation," See said. "He continued to work in Wallace and the forest . . . He did work to get a memorial for the fallen firefighters." Pulaski worked successfully, Roizen said, to help obtain a \$500 federal appropriation to purchase gravestones for the firefighting casualties buried at two mass sites at the Nine Mile Cemetery near Wallace. "Pulaski made a case that the men who had died in

the U.S. Roizen noted that the 1910 North Idaho portion of the Big Blowup brought national attention to firefighting practices, and how the modern firefighters should proceed. The 1910 disaster led to the now-outdated one hundred percent fire suppression paradigm, that eventually caused what has been deemed forest overgrowth—a prime breeding ground for tree diseases.

"If that's so," said Roizen, "then perhaps relearning the historic story . . . will help us as a society, emancipate ourselves from that [one-hundred percent suppression] paradigm. Aside from the memorial purpose, that's the kind of social purpose we've seen for our project." Nowadays, prescribed

Roizen: "We hope to have the trail and the trailhead done by next summer [2005], which happens to be the 100th anniversary of the Forest Service."

Despite the federal appropriation, the project remains \$125,000 short, Roizen said. Politicians and project leaders have stated that the project, when and if it's completed, could give the economically beleaguered Silver Valley some financial therapy.

"We just decided we ought to save the trail, and at the same time look at ways that the Silver Valley, and all of Idaho, could benefit from this place," See said.

Dave Goins is managing editor of IDAHO magazine.

The North Idaho-based Pulaski Trail Project is working to bring the events of August 20, 1910 to life.

the 1910 fire . . . had died as heroically as the men who had gone over to fight [World War I]," Roizen said.

Author Pyne wrote: "Ed Pulaski never claimed—in fact, ignored and dismissed—any thought that he was a hero. Others made that assertion, and there is little evidence that Pulaski sought to boost that label or to play on it. He declined to become a celebrity. He shunned publicity and only once, thirteen years later, wrote down his own account."

The North Idaho-based Pulaski Trail Project is working to bring the events of August 20, 1910 to life.

The Pulaski Trail Project, supporters hope, will be a fitting effort to highlight the history of forest policy in

burns in some forests are considered to be more responsible forest management practices by many people. The Pulaski Trail Project seeks to restore the overgrown trail, the Nicholson Mine entrance, and create the National Wildfire Education Center and Museum in Wallace or Silverton. Said

A suited Ed Pulaski near the Nicholson Mine entrance in September 1910, after saving forty lives, including his own, during the "Big Blowup" fire the month before.



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january 2005 calendar of events

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|-------|---|--------|--|
| 1 | Polar Bear Plunge, Coeur d'Alene | 21 | Ryan Shupe and the Rubber Band in Concert, Grace |
| 1 | 2005 Prairie Creek Classic, Ketchum | 21 | "Maya Soleil" play, Sandpoint |
| 1 | Elk City Drag Races, Elk City | 22 | ERC Winter Skills Series: Snow Shelters, Ketchum |
| 1 | New Year's Snowmobile Fun Run, Dixie | 22 | Winter Tracking Workshops, Ketchum |
| 1 | 18th Annual Freeze on Skis, Twin Falls | 22-23 | Winter Carnival at Lookout, Wallace |
| 1 | Winter Gardens Aglow, Boise | 22-23 | Shoeshoe Softball Tournament, Priest Lake |
| 1-2 | "Yesterday's Tomorrows," Boise | 27-29 | Crab Feed, Kamiah |
| 1-2 | Holiday Light Show, Coeur d'Alene | 28-29 | Best of the Banff Mountain Film Fest, Sandpoint |
| 1-5 | Winter Carnival, Sandpoint | 28-2/6 | Winter Carnival, McCall |
| 1-5 | The World of Giants, Idaho Falls | 29 | Family Concert-Symphony Orchestra, Coeur d'Alene |
| 1-4 | Journey to the North Pole Coeur d'Alene | 29 | Winter Animal Tracking Workshops, Ketchum |
| 1-31 | Eagle Watching, Coeur d'Alene | 29 | Viewing Birds on Snowshoes, Ketchum |
| 4 | Mory Hedlund Memorial Ride, Avery | 29 | Ski the Rails, Ketchum |
| 4 | Avalanche Awareness Class, Hailey | 30 | Toyota Ski Day, Mullan |
| 8-9 | Master's Race at Lookout Pass Ski Area, Wallace | 31 | Symphony Family Concert, Coeur d'Alene |
| 8-9 | Selkirk Classic USTSA Telemark Race, Sandpoint | 31 | Special Olympics, Wallace/Mullan |
| 11 | "What's in a Folk Song," Boise | | |
| 14-16 | "Something's Afoot" play, Coeur d'Alene | | |
| 14 | Annual Crab Feast, Grangeville | | |
| 14-23 | Winter Carnival, Sandpoint | | |
| 15 | Wild Game Feast, Coeur d'Alene | | |
| 15-16 | Snowshoe Softball Tournament, Priest Lake | | |
| 16 | Big Air Contest, Ski Area, Wallace | | |
| 16 | Flamenco! with Brianna Rego, Ketchum | | |
| 16 | "Ride and Eat," Elk City | | |
| 16 | Galena Ski School, Ketchum | | |
| 17-18 | Snow Boss Snocross Race, Haugen | | |
| 18 | Lookout Big Air Contest, Mullan | | |
| 18 | Pig-In-The-Mountain, Clarkia | | |
| 19 | Reader's Theatre presents "Hedda Gabler," Coeur d'Alene | | |

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The Mail Via Wagon

By Arthur Hart

Rural Free Delivery of the U.S. Mail was not instituted until October, 1896. Before that time, people who lived in the country had to go on horseback or by buggy to the nearest post office. (Of course there were no automobiles yet). This was often a trip of ten miles or more in a young, sparsely-settled state like Idaho.

This month's historical snapshot shows Fred L. Evans of Caldwell about to place letters in a rural mailbox near Greenleaf, in 1912. The small, box-like mail wagon he is driving is typical of the kind used in rural Idaho at the time. It only took one horse to pull a rig as small as this.

The inscription on the wagon, "Rural Delivery Route No. 1," refers to routes out of the Caldwell post office. Each town that was designated as headquarters of an RFD system had

numbered routes of its own.

At first, to qualify for free delivery, a rural area had to have at least four families per mile along the route. Later, after automobiles were used, areas with as few as two families per mile could get the service.

In May, 1907, Boise had four rural delivery routes, and three of these carriers were women. The Idaho Statesman noted that "Mollie Stewart, undisputed champion woman bronco buster and trick rider of the northwest, takes over R.R. no. 2, 26 miles—all territory covered by the Ridenbaugh canal." There were other women drivers of mail vans all over Idaho at the time.

Some rural service was very slow, and led some citizens to complain bitterly, even to their Congressmen. The problem seemed to be the routing pro-

cess the mail underwent before it ever got to the carriers. Mail intended for the town of Marsh, for example, had to go from Boise to Emmett by train for sorting, then on to Montour. One man decided he would rather pick up his mail at a post office several miles away than wait for it up to three days.

When a rural carrier in eastern Idaho bought an automobile in 1915, a local editor quipped that since it had always taken him all day to cover his route driving a horse, and it now took only half as long, he should either give up half his pay or take on a second route. "A man faces all kinds of risks when he forges ahead and makes improvements or gives better service in this sordid world."

Arthur Hart is director emeritus of the Idaho State Historical Society.

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