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May 2006

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MAY 2006 VOL. 5, NO. 8

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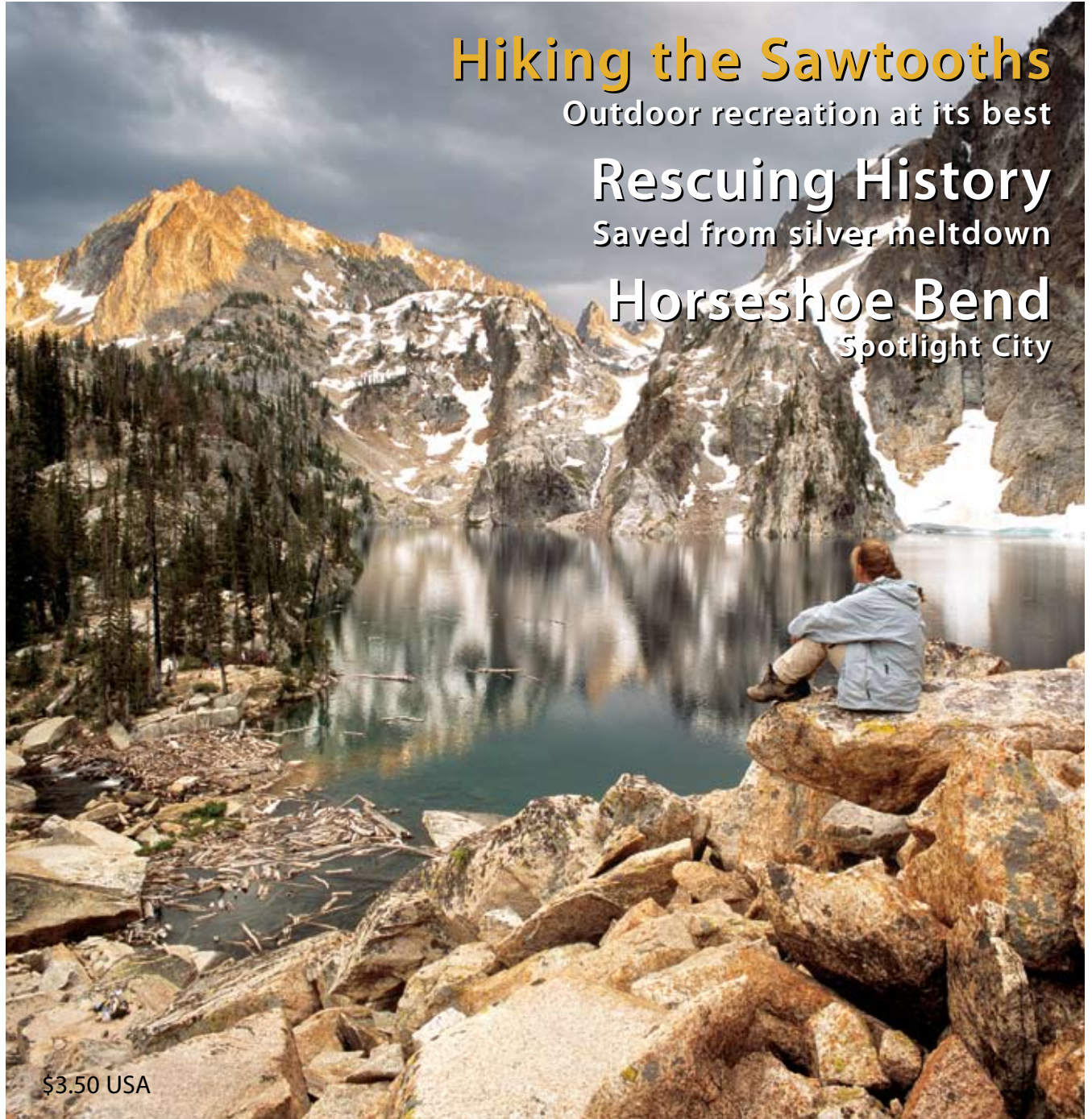
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Photo!





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Hiking the Sawtooths 12

The Sawtooth Mountains of central Idaho represent one of the most famous landscapes in the state. If you haven't seen them for yourself, you must go. With forty-two peaks over ten thousand feet and more than forty official trails, the Sawtooth Wilderness offers hiking and outdoor recreation at its best. Author Lynna Howard takes us along, sharing history, humor, and how-to advice along the way.

By Lynna Howard

Horseshoe Bend—Spotlight City 32

Twenty-five minutes from Boise on Highway 55, Horseshoe Bend is appropriately named. The town, population 770, is nestled in the horseshoe-shaped bend of the Payette River. A “hard-edged, working-man’s town,” Horseshoe Bend really took off when, in 1862, gold was discovered in the Boise Basin. But it was farmers and ranchers—not miners—who thrived when they discovered their own “gold mine” in the area’s fertile ground and mild climate. A railroad and sawmill soon followed, and though the sawmill has closed and the railroad transports sightseers instead of lumber these days, Horseshoe Bend is alive and kicking... and it’s just around the bend.

By members of the Scenic Payette River Historical Society

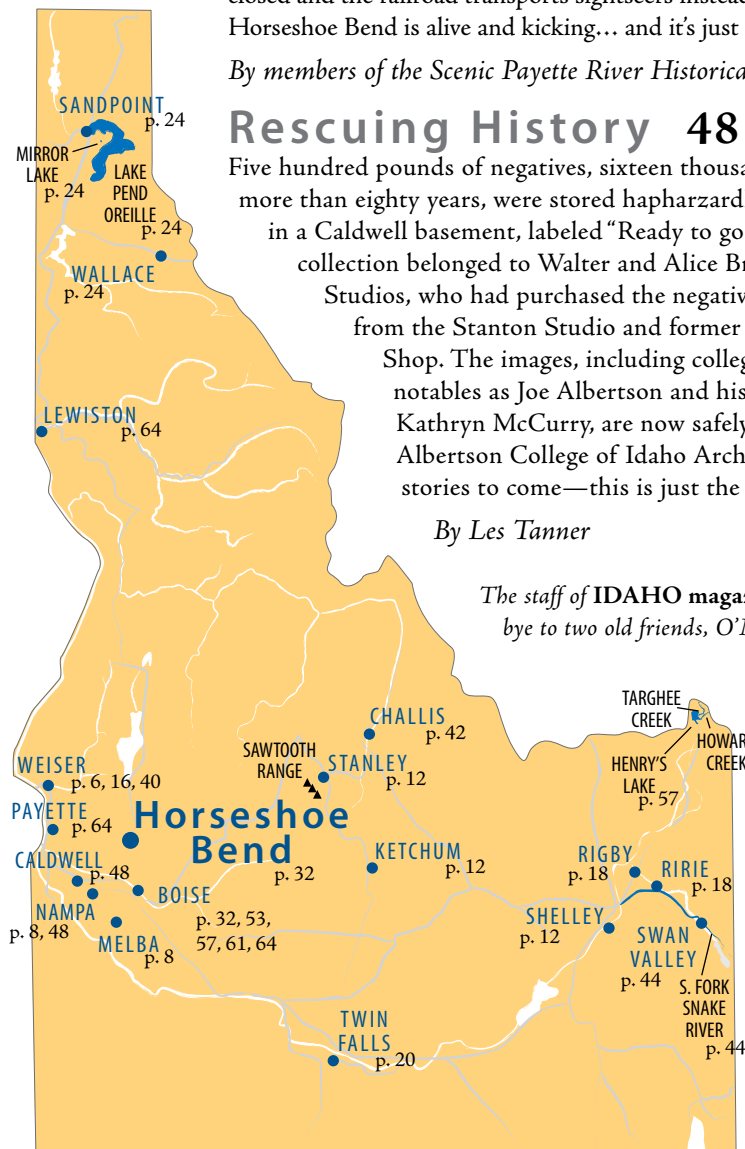
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Five hundred pounds of negatives, sixteen thousand images spanning more than eighty years, were stored haphazardly in cardboard boxes in a Caldwell basement, labeled “Ready to go to meltdown.” The collection belonged to Walter and Alice Braun of Braun Studios, who had purchased the negatives and prints in 1947 from the Stanton Studio and former Snodgrass Picture Shop. The images, including college photos of such notables as Joe Albertson and his soon-to-be bride Kathryn McCurry, are now safely stored at the Albertson College of Idaho Archives. Think of the stories to come—this is just the beginning!

By Les Tanner

The staff of IDAHO magazine recently said goodbye to two old friends, O’Malley and Gus.

Though they were just dogs, old and scruffy and ornery and warty and cute in a way only a mother could love, they were family, and they will be missed. But there is a silver lining—Hilda, a rescue animal and a real sweetheart, has joined the staff. Stop in and say hello!



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 Hello girls

cover photo

Pictured: In upper Goat Creek Valley there are patches of permanent snowbanks. North-facing slopes along Goat Lake (8,220 feet) are fed by ice chunks that break off at the base of an 1,800-foot cliff wall. A slippery climb past Goat Falls leads hikers to incomparable alpine views. Nearby Williams and Thompson peaks top 10,500 feet.
 Photographer: Leland Howard

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letter to the editor

> Dear *IDAHO* magazine,

It was a great surprise to open that big brown envelope and find a prize as well as a certificate in recognition of my recipe contribution. It was an extravagant reward, which I greatly appreciate, and I was particularly gratified with the certificate that is a wonderfully reckless acknowledgement of my rather modest culinary gifts. At present the certificate has replaced the college diploma on my office wall.

I want to thank you, the judges, the magazine, and all its personnel for this treasure.

Sincerely,

*Tom Kelley, 2005 IDAHO magazine Recipe Contest, First Place
General Recipe for Irish potato soup published in our March 2006 issue.*

> Dear *IDAHO* magazine,

For the third time since moving to Idaho a little over two years ago, I purchased a copy of *IDAHO* magazine recently, the March 2006 edition, and yet again I was disappointed in the magazine. Each time I've been so hopeful that I'll enjoy and appreciate the magazine, and this time I had every intention of purchasing a subscription for my husband and myself as well as my brother and his wife, but once again I just didn't think it was worth the purchase price.

Your magazine and the *Nebraska* magazine which we occasionally read when we lived there before moving to Idaho pale in comparison to the *Kansas* magazine, which I've read for years (my parents lived there).

What disappoints me so much about *IDAHO Magazine* is that there could be so many informative, delightful articles about places to go and things to see and do in Idaho, and there's very little of that in the magazine. I enjoyed the brief article, "The house that Epi built," and we will surely go and try out what sounds to be a wonderful restaurant. But the article about "Homedale" did not inspire me to want to visit that city, the review of the book, *Chocolate & Fireflies*, has no relationship to Idaho nor any particular interest for me, and if I didn't live in Idaho, there was absolutely nothing in the whole magazine that would inspire me to think there was any reason to visit the state.

While I appreciate the fact that the *Kansas* magazine must be considerably more expensive to produce, its glossy pages are so much more colorful and depict the scenes in a way that makes them much more real.

I like the human interest stories, but a state like Idaho with so much natural beauty should surely have a magazine that features all of that nature as a major part of each issue. My brother has lived in the state for over 40 years and still regularly comments that there's much that he's yet to see.

So, I won't be purchasing even single copies again because there's just not enough in the magazine as it's currently published to satisfy my cravings of wanting to know each and every place in the state that is potentially a spot I need to visit. I thank you for your efforts of producing a magazine about this wonderful state, but I feel you are falling far short of what the state deserves.

Ruth M. Richter

> CORRECTION

IDAHO magazine incorrectly stated in last month's moose story that moose antlers are never shed. In fact, moose antlers, like deer and elk antlers, are shed. This error was ours, not author Dale Towell's.

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Trash to treasure

It's yard sale season!

By Donna L. Peterson

The first signs of spring in western Idaho are usually found in the aroma of fragrant flowers and the sight of wobbly legged calves bringing life to the pastures checker-boarding the valley.

Yet for me, it's more than just the flora and fauna that announce spring's arrival. It is the sight of hundreds of yard/garage sales dotting the hillsides and blossoming throughout the neighborhoods that lets me know spring has finally sprung.

Last spring I was bitten by the garage-sale bug. I fell prey to the accumulation of far too many cast-offs, or other people's "junk." I bought a stationary exercise bike that made a fine hat rack, a night stand that sat all year in the garage waiting to be refinished, two dozen Mason jars for the preserves I

never made, and another fondue pot to add to my collection of unused pots. My once-organized existence had become a "junk" dealer's dream.

That is why this spring I decided to have a garage sale of my own. It seemed like an easy way to make

money off the useless items that had started to cramp my lifestyle. So, after spending two entire weeks sorting,

cleaning, and pricing my once-treasured finds, I was finally ready to haul them into my driveway for someone else to discover.

As soon as my low-priced items started disappearing, my husband, Brad, was inspired

to tote out a bucket of broken fishing poles and some old, rusty tools to add to my display. Even my son, David, decided to get in on the action and brought out a laundry basket filled with worn-out toys he'd dug out of the basement.

About midway through the day, some of the items I had referred to as "junk" seemed to look more attractive when mere strangers fondled them with interest. The plaid blouse I had almost decided to use as a dust rag took on a whole new charm when some lady held it up for inspection and mumbled, "How much you want for this?"

It is the sight of hundreds of yard/garage sales dotting the hillsides and blossoming throughout the neighborhoods that lets me know spring has finally sprung.

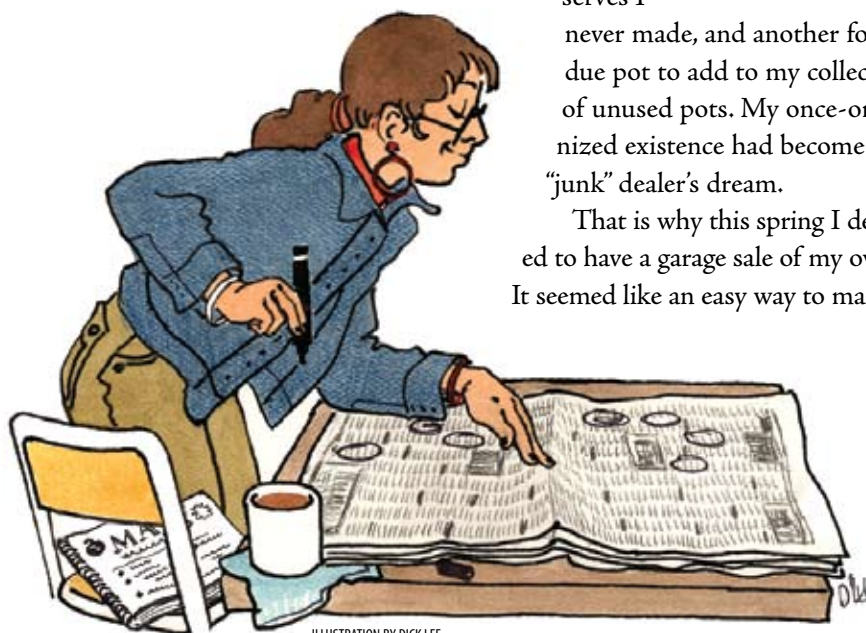


ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

for what it's worth

Without thinking, I yanked it from her grasp. "It's not for sale!" I said, more loudly than I had intended. Noticing the startled look in her eyes, I tried to apologize by handing her another blouse for free...but it was too late. The goodwill gesture was ignored as she made a beeline for the safety of her car.

Feeling rather guilty, I wadded up my blouse and tossed it into a box under the display table, along with an assortment of other cast-offs I had decided I couldn't do without. I knew my husband would harass me if he saw that I was hoarding the very items I had proclaimed to be "junk," so I quickly threw a tablecloth over my stash and got back to work.

As the day was winding up, I started slashing prices so low that the Mediterranean coffee table I had kept under a tarp in the garage for the last decade went from twenty-five dollars to sitting on the curb with a FOR FREE sign perched upon its chipped mahogany surface.

Finally, at the end of what seemed to be a very grueling day in the unseasonably warm sun, I took down my signs and sauntered into the house for a much-needed break. My husband told me not to worry, that he'd haul what was left to the WICAP thrift store in town.

It wasn't until I heard the distinct sound of my husband's old pickup truck grinding into reverse that I remembered my hidden stash beneath the display table.

By the time I had run back out there, it was too late. My "treasures" were gone.

That following Monday morning, I was the first customer at WICAP. I bought back all of the merchandise I had stowed away, including the plaid blouse I had so ruthlessly snatched from the hands of my would-be customer. It only cost me a little over twenty dollars to retrieve all of my priceless "treasures."

Perhaps in a couple of years, after I've attended a few more yard sales and stocked up on some more "junk," I might attempt to have another garage sale. If anyone should attend a sale at a Victorian-style brick house in Weiser, however, they would probably be wise not to purchase any plaid blouses that may be on (or hidden under) the sales table.

Donna L. Peterson lives in Weiser.

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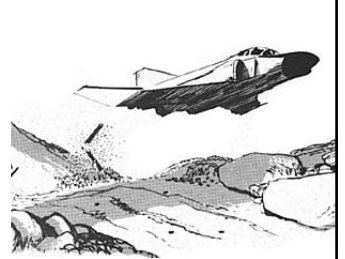


ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN

A sound athlete

Melba's Lewt Greenfield excels in three sports despite deafness

By Jon P. Brown

Lewt Greenfield has hit home runs. He has sunk key baskets, and he has set records. But the Melba High School senior has never heard the crack of the bat, the swish of the net, the pounding of his own feet, or the cheer of the crowd.

Lewt is deaf. He wears hearing aids, and he has excelled in athletics all his life despite his deafness. But don't call his lack of hearing a disability. With the support of his parents, Scott and ZoeAnne, and teammates and coaches, deafness has been an enabling factor in Lewt's athletic career spanning baseball, basketball, and cross-country running.

"They didn't even think of me as deaf," Lewt said of his mom and dad. "They just tried to get me out there and try as much as possible. I'm glad they did that to me. I've got confidence in myself, and I can do it on my own. I'm not afraid of anything."

When he was growing up, there were the predictable social obstacles. Other children teased him. But as Lewt's ability blossomed, and he continued to play basketball and baseball, he became part of the team. The respect grew.

"He likes to joke around, and he loves to have fun," said Cameron Keeney, a lifelong teammate in baseball and basketball. "He's a happy-go-lucky kid who's fun to play with."

The six-foot-three senior showed his fierce competitiveness and his lack of fear by tackling not only baseball at an early age—he began playing in first grade—but taking on a sport that requires full



PHOTO BY JON P. BROWN



PHOTO BY JON P. BROWN

OPPOSITE: **Lewt Greenfield** is a senior at Melba High School.

ABOVE: **Sideline signing**—Lewt reads the lips of MHS Basketball Coach Bob Lenz, center, while Sheila Robertson interprets Coach Bob Lenz's instructions through sign language.

concentration of all the senses all the time. Lewt started playing basketball in third grade, and by his final high school season he was a key contributor to the Mustangs' effort in the 2A Western Idaho Conference. He would come in as a reserve—sometimes as early as the first quarter—and handle the ball often for Coach Bob Lenz's team.

"We carry nine players, but I have a philosophy," Coach Lenz said. "You get

in, get your shot, and you play well, and you'll get your minutes."

Lewt's playing time increased as the 2005-06 season wore on. After splitting time on the junior varsity and varsity squads as a junior, the four-year high school player had earned his stripes and honed his skills enough to be the big man any basketball team needs. And, with his tenacious play and bright white

the Melba High School senior has never heard the crack of the bat, the swish of the net, the pounding of his own feet, or the cheer of the crowd.... But don't call his lack of hearing a disability.

headband, he was pretty easy to spot on the floor.

"I've had a lot of practice and learned a lot from last year and through a lot of work with my team," Lewt said of his basketball exploits.

"The team helps me out with where I'm supposed to be on the floor, and they help me with finger signs so I know what the play is."

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Lewt delivers a pitch in a non-conference game in Homedale on March 17. Greenfield homered but was tagged with a 14-3 loss to the Trojans.

But in the frenetic game of basketball, Lewt needed more than the help of the four guys with whom he shared the hardwood. That's where sign language interpreters Sheila Robertson and Natalie Kelley played critical roles. The two were hired to help Lewt communicate with his coach and keep him in the flow of the game. One or the other attended practice and games to ensure Lewt knew what was going on at all times. He also read Coach Lenz's lips for instructions during timeouts or other team huddles.

"It's a lot of work," Lewt said. "When the ball stops, I look immediately to my coach or interpreter."

For the uninitiated, it would have been difficult to figure out there was

anything out of the ordinary going on during Melba games in the past four years. The players scurried for loose balls, jumped for rebounds, and drove the basket in search of scores—just like any other basketball game. But over at the bench, a curious woman leaped to her feet and signed frantically whenever the coach had something to bark at his players. That's unusual in a sport where referees have the authority to call a technical foul when more than one person from a

Lewt earned honorable mention recognition in all-league voting as a junior. He carried a .300 batting average and posted an impressive .450 on-base percentage. And when he is on base, Lewt isn't someone to ignore.



PHOTO BY JON R. BROWN

team bench is out of his or her seat when the game is in session.

"Right at first, it was just different because you have a lady in the locker room," Coach Lenz said of the interpreters. "But they're so good at their jobs, they are just part of the team now. I've said Sheila ought to stay on as a coach." But Sheila and Natalie became as important to Melba basketball as the coach or the players.

"The four other players have to communicate with him and have to come up with some type of hand signals," said Ken Anderson, a basketball coach at Orofino's Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind.

Lewt sought out the interpreter whenever he ran down the floor to find out what play his coach had called or if there were other instructions. There were times, however, when the interpreters couldn't help him with his game. When Melba had the ball, Lewt had to be alert

on the floor to changes in the other team's defenses. When on defense, Lewt had to make sure no opponent had stepped in his path to knock him off his defensive assignment with a screen.

"Basketball has to be the toughest for him," Coach Lenz said.

But the easiest sport has to be baseball, Lewt's first love, and the pursuit he concentrates on at Melba this spring. He's the Mustangs' leadoff hitter with some pop in his bat—he homered March 17 in a 14-3 loss to Homedale—and he is one of Melba's top starting pitchers.

"He's got a great awareness of the game," said seventh-year Melba Coach Tim Helgerson. "He's our best fielding pitcher by far. He sees and reads the bunt faster than anybody else on our team. And he also has great vision at the plate." It has been mentioned so much it has become cliché, but perhaps Lewt's minimized hearing has heightened his other senses.

Coach Helgerson said Lewt draws a lot of walks and commands the respect of his teammates when he plays the outfield. "They just treat him like he's a regu-

lar teenage boy,” the coach said. “The only real thing that’s different is that when he calls for a ball...it’s his.”

Lewt earned honorable mention recognition in all-league voting as a junior. He carried a .300 batting average and posted an impressive .450 on-base percentage. And when he is on base, Lewt isn’t someone to ignore.

“He’s lightning smart on the bases,” Coach Helgerson said. “He can read the pitchers well and knows when to run and when to take off.”

That quick first step comes from years of playing the game, but it also can be traced to Lewt’s latest passion—running. He has been running for the past six or seven years and owns a piece of the MHS record in cross-country (five kilometers—3.1 miles—in seventeen minutes, thirty seconds). He finished eighteenth out of 120 competitors in the 2A state meet last fall at Eagle Island State Park (an improvement from his thirty-ninth place showing in 2004). In the summer, he ran the Kuna Days five-kilometer race.

“I picked up cross-country to get better in basketball and to help me get in shape,” Lewt said.

Lewt’s participation seems to have turned into an inspiration. In the fall of 2004, his junior year, he made an immediate impact on the Mustangs’ cross-country program. Melba qualified for the state meet for the first time in school history. And, though Lewt is finished with high school running, he’s not through trying to influence the program he helped put on the map.

“I hope next year they go [to state] again,” Lewt said. “I’m depending on those runners.”

The gauntlet has been thrown down. Lewt doesn’t shy away from challenges, and he doesn’t expect anyone else to, either. Much too modest to consider himself a role model, Lewt does have a keen awareness of what his three-sport career at Melba might mean to other young would-be athletes standing on the sidelines or questioning their potential because of disabilities.

“I’m hoping kids with disabilities won’t be afraid to step up,” said Lewt. “You never know what you can do until you try.”

Jon P. Brown is managing editor of The Owyhee Avalanche in Homedale and a freelance writer.

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H I K I N G the SAWTOOTH WILDERNESS

By Lynna Howard

“Say, is this Imogene?” the bikini-clad hiker inquired. Her likewise-attired companion adjusted her backpack. My brother, Steve, had been wandering around the Sawtooth Wilderness from the lesser-known western side. Using topographical maps, he had made his own no-trail way to Imogene Lake. He was feeling pretty proud of himself until the British girls arrived and gave him a new kind of wilderness experience.

A lot of people may not know the difference between Idaho and Iowa, but a surprising number will recognize Sun Valley and the Sawtooth Range. It’s as if that part of Idaho were a different world, one with an international reputation as far from “famous potatoes” as you can get. Think hikers from all over the world, Hollywood stars, Class 6 rock climbing...think Hemingway.

“Best of all he loved the fall, the leaves yellow in the cottonwoods, leaves floating in the trout streams, and above the hills the high blue windless skies. Now he will be part of them forever.”

—Ernest Hemingway, Idaho, 1939.

From Idaho Falls, I drive west across the desert. Several mountain ranges, small and blue in the distance, are dwarfed by Idaho’s version of the Big Empty. Highway 20 rolls past lava flows, sagebrush, and a few pronghorn antelope that range across Idaho National Laboratory (INL) lands where I’m forbidden to go. The INL is almost as big as Rhode Island, and from where I live, you have to cross it to get to the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA).

Arco is a good pit stop—gas prices will be higher in Ketchum/Sun Valley. Craters of the Moon National Monument flows by on my left (“Devils Vomit” to pioneers struggling through the hardened lava flows in 1840). At the intersection with Highway 75, I turn north to follow the Wood River Valley upstream. There’s less sagebrush and more grass; foothills become mountains, with the Pioneer Mountains on my right and the Smoky Mountains on the left.

Dusty settlements with a high percentage of boarded-over storefronts are left behind. Mountain towns go from rich to richer, culminating in star-studded Ketchum/Sun Valley. Even Hailey has a rock gym, an airport ringed with an impressive number of Lear jets, and enough espresso shops to knock your socks

PHOTO BY LELAND HOWARD



Stanley Lake reflects the snow-flecked crown of McGown Peak in the northwestern section of the Sawtooth Wilderness. The lake and town are named for Captain John Stanley, the oldest member of the first prospecting party to enter Stanley Basin (1863). This lake is accessible by road; drive five miles west of Stanley on Highway 21 and follow signs to Stanley Lake and campgrounds.

HIKING DIRECTIONS

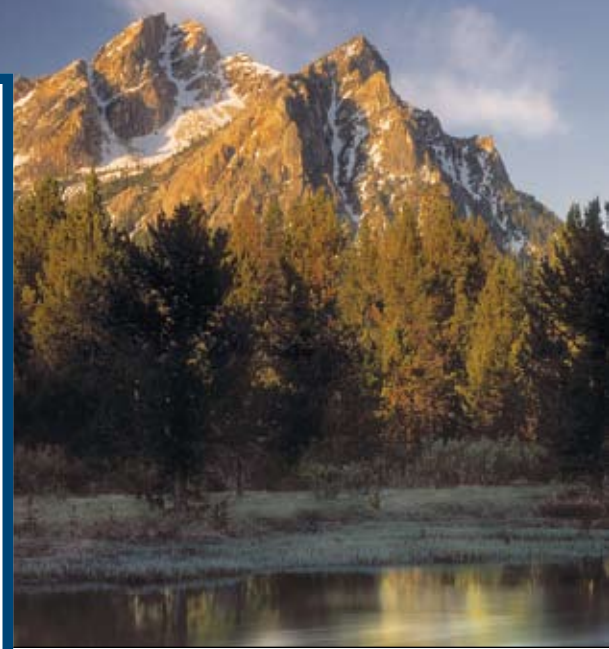
“I say, is this Imogene?” About twelve miles south of Stanley, and about forty-eight miles north of Ketchum, turn west off Highway 75 at Decker Flat Road. Drive west, cross the Salmon River, and turn at the Hell Roaring Creek Road sign. Hell Roaring Road is good at first, but has many rough spots as it approaches the upper trailhead. Four-wheel-drive is recommended. (If you don't want to drive the rough road, a hiking trail just north of the road will add about four miles to your hike.)

Hike through forest on pleasant Hell Roaring Creek Trail #097. At mile 1.8 from the trailhead, Hell Roaring Lake comes into view. The “Finger of Fate” is an eight-hundred-foot granite spire viewable from the trail, along with other fantastical rock formations. This part of the hike is easy, with only two hundred feet of elevation gain. Continue uphill and southerly for a strenuous hike along Imogene Trail #092 to Imogene Lake at mile 5.4, an additional elevation gain of about one thousand feet.

The melting snowpack varies each spring—you may pass several smaller ponds before reaching Imogene Lake. The trail to Imogene can be dusty and hot in August, with few water sources. Imogene boasts a dramatic setting, with primitive campsites for backpackers. Follow “Leave No Trace” camping guidelines.

Goat Lake (photographer's paradise). About 2.5 miles west/northwest of Stanley, on Highway 21, turn south on Iron Creek Road (#619) and drive three miles to the trailhead. The gravel road is suitable for two-wheel-drive in good weather. There are some drop-offs to skirt, slippery footing, and steep sections of trail. It's a strenuous 3.8 miles to the lake at 8,220 feet (about sixteen hundred feet gain from the trailhead). Allow three to four hours to hike to the lake. Backpackers can find primitive campsites on the east side of the lake. True alpine terrain, braided waterfalls, rock towers, and cliffs make for an impressive 360-degree view. Follow “Leave No Trace” camping guidelines.

Alpine Creek Trail #94. Turn off Highway 75 onto Alturas Lake Road about thirty-nine miles north of Ketchum, near milepost 169. Drive about five miles of paved road, passing several developed campsites at Alturas Lake. Continue on a gravel/dirt road about 1.6 miles. Park in the parking area near the creek ford. See the description of the hike within the text.



ABOVE: McGown Peak, 9,860 feet, is named after the McGown (McGowan) brothers, George and Arthur Sr., who settled in the area in the late 1800s. They ran the first store and post office in Stanley and herded cattle to supply miners with beef.

OPPOSITE: Snowmelt floods granite peninsula in Imogene Lake. The main lake is 8,436 feet above sea level. A chain of smaller lakes, watery pearls below Payette Peak, offer variations on alpine beauty up to 8,950 feet. It's a strenuous eleven-mile round trip to Imogene Lake from the trailhead, and only backpackers who spend the night see the saturated, magical colors of dawn and sunset.

off. There's an advantage to this approach to the Sawtooths—an hour away from wilderness, you can stock up on outdoor gear, guidebooks, and gourmet treats that rival anything in Europe.

I meet a friend who grew up in Ketchum, and she guides me to fresh-squeezed, organic juice and sesame seed cookies; then on to pasta with burnt butter and unpronounceable cheese. For hiking treats we hit the fudge shop for fresh, warm fudge.

We continue north on Highway 75, with a stop at the well-marked SNRA Headquarters for maps. The ranger gives us “poop kits” intriguingly titled “Nature is



PHOTO BY LELAND HOWARD

Calling...How will you Answer?" Back on the highway, we snake uphill, steadily gaining altitude until we top out at Galena Summit, elevation 7,300 feet. The view from the summit is justly famous. The steep eastern escarpment of the Sawtooth Range runs thirty-two miles from south to north—we sigh over the monumental, jagged jumble of pinkish granite west of Highway 75; the gentler outlines of the Boulder Mountains and the White Cloud Peaks define the eastern side of Sawtooth Valley. The headwaters of the River of No Return, the mighty Salmon River, are below us in the form of a glass-clear stream that even a child could wade across. We begin the brake-burning drive down from Galena Summit. Pioneers used to pull a tree behind their wagons to slow their descent down what was a narrow, winding dirt road in the early 1900s.

The first white man to see the view from Galena Summit was Alexander Ross of the Pacific Fur Company. On September 18, 1824, he stood on the pass with his Canadian and Indian companions and marveled at the scene. The explorers found an abundance of game, including grizzly bears, in the valley

below. Ross wrote in his journal that the bears “were rooting like a bunch of pigs. There were nine in one place, and we shot seven at one time.” The bears were gorging themselves on camas lily bulbs near present-day Stanley. Ross’ trapping party added beaver pelts to their loot, but lost some of them when horses packing the pelts slipped to their death in the narrow canyon where the Salmon River makes its way past present-day Clayton. Ross and his party finally made their way eastward into the Big Lost River Valley, where they rested before returning to Oregon.

There are surprisingly few settlements along the paved highway corridor even today. Most of what one sees from Galena Summit, and even beyond, is the SNRA, 756,000 acres of self-proclaimed “paradise for hikers, backpackers, and campers.” The Forest Service should have added fishing, rock climbing, and winter sports to their description of recreation heaven. Early settlers found salmon so thick they threw rocks at them to get them to move off the gravel before horses could be coaxed to cross at fords, as author Ester Yarber notes in her book *Stanley-Sawtooth Country*. Five-mile-long Redfish Lake, named for the color of spawning sockeye salmon, is the largest of hundreds of lakes still favored by anglers. Sockeye salmon runs have diminished—but plentiful trout, whitefish, and kokanee salmon maintain the area’s reputation for rewarding fishing expeditions.

Mount Heyburn, at 10,220 feet, is a triple-summit beauty west of Redfish Lake popular with rock climbers and photographers. Some of the best climbing in the Sawtooths is near the lake, so the Redfish Lake Lodge (the largest resort in

the SNRA) has become an unofficial information center for climbers.

Conservation-minded groups have been proposing national-park status for the Sawtooth area since 1911, but in 1937 the Forest Service carved out the “Sawtooth Primitive Area” that in 1972 became the 217,088-acre Sawtooth Wilderness, the spiked crown of a much larger national recreation area. The SNRA protects salmon, other fish, forests, and recreational value in general. Elevations within the designated wilderness part of the SNRA range from 5,150 to 10,750 feet; Mount Heyburn is one of forty-two peaks over ten thousand feet. There are more than forty official trails within the wilderness alone, providing about three hundred miles of classic mountain hiking, not to mention hundreds more in the surrounding area.

My friend and I planned an ambitious hike for the next day, so we climbed into our sleeping bags at twilight. We slept that night in a shepherd’s wagon. The temperature dropped to about thirty degrees Fahrenheit, and a light breeze came up—summer in the mountains! Brrrrrr. It was hard to get out of the sleeping bag in the morning. We looked at each other and nodded—too cold to speak.

We warmed up hiking above Alturas Lake. In fact, we got damned hot. It was a beautiful hike past a rushing stream with lots of miniature water-



PHOTO BY LELAND HOWARD

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL HIKES

By Margaret Fuller

1. Be sure to figure the elevation gain in a hike ahead of time. If you don't, your companions may complain, as one man's family did, that the miles you tell them are "Fuller miles" and not accurate!

2. Choose hikes to fit your companions' interests and abilities. Consider their age, physical fitness, sense of balance, fear of heights, tendency for carsickness, fear of bad roads, and desire to catch fish or photograph mountains with cliffs.

3. Children aren't into scenery. They need snacks, stories, fishing poles, small toys, warm clothes, sandy streams or lakes to wade or mini-mountains to climb, and SHORT distances. With young children, having your gear spot-packed in to a base camp works much better than backpacking. Our granddaughter, Sierra, then three, walked all the way to Born Lakes and back when we had our gear carried in by llamas.

4. Even on day hikes, always take rain gear (pants and jacket or poncho) AND warm clothes, including at least a fleece jacket, insulated vest, long underwear, wool hat, and gloves. A sunny morning can turn into a thunderstorm with hail as cold as snow by mid-afternoon.

5. Make sure your car is in good condition and can handle the access road you plan to drive. Drive slowly (ten or fifteen miles an hour on rough roads) to avoid flat tires and damage to your car.

6. When backpacking, too much weight can make the trip an ordeal rather than a delight. Very fit young adults can carry more weight without problems and without reducing their enjoyment, but most people can't. Try to travel as light as possible, but still have everything you need.

Margaret Fuller lives in Weiser.

falls, through sunbaked pine trees and Douglas firs, with the ever-present jagged skyline of the Sawtooths as a backdrop.

Wildflowers in the higher alpine meadows thought it was springtime in August, with lupine, Indian paintbrush, and multitudes of little yellow flowers in fine fettle. From the night before, we knew that snow was not far off. Some of the flowers would be caught by the first snowfall before they finished their blooming/seed cycle.

We made it to the snow line about a mile past where the official trail is maintained. The Alturas/Alpine Creek Trail is a 7.6-mile round trip that is moderately strenuous. A steep, hard walk, but still a walk. We passed beautiful lakes that filled glacial cirques with their clear waters. We saw several trout swimming in the largest lake, about two hours up the trail. The trail grew indistinct at a very long waterfall that came down in three steps, all lined with wildflowers.

We climbed a steep chute on the left side of the falls, about a Class 3 climb, and kept going into the snow fields. When we topped out, we could see more lakes below us and a good deal of the entire Sawtooth Range, as well as most of the White Cloud Peaks across the valley. We took our boots off and bathed our hot feet in the snow, then started the long trek down. When we finally came to a mellower part of the creek, still about thirty minutes from the trailhead, we waded in the water. I made noises of cold distress, but my friend was so worn and hot that wading wasn't enough. She got naked and dunked herself in the snow-cold water, which was fine until some late hikers showed up on the trail. She made a hasty retreat into the grass and willows on the other side of the creek. There she squatted with her shoulders and head above the sea of grass while the hikers stopped to talk.

"We've already been hiking for forty-five minutes," the female of the party said. Yeah, and you've got another



PHOTO BY ILEAND HOWARD



ABOVE: **Goat Lake** is surrounded by nearly vertical cliffs. Early morning and late afternoon light emphasize the warm, pinkish tones of the granite. Backpackers find small niches for camping between the granite benches above the east side of the lake.

OPPOSITE: **Hell Roaring Creek** links Hell Roaring and Imogene lakes. Hikers can see or hear multiple waterfalls as they make their way up the trail. Adventurous hikers can explore beyond Imogene Lake, where the inlet continues to display stepped waterfalls.

er hour and a half to go at that pace before you hit the first and smallest lake, we told her. "Oh well," she said, "it was a lovely walk, anyway." The males in the party assured us they were not offended by finding a naked woman bathing in the stream. "But, man, it must be cold!" They shook their heads as they continued up the trail.

The sun slid down its blue slope of sky to catch on the teeth of the mountains, so we left the trailhead and climbed to a picture-perfect vantage point for the show of shows. There were clouds to the northeast, but only a few scattered cirri elsewhere. After the clouds had flamed and dimmed, the moon rose in a nearly empty sky and filled the space between the mountain ranges with pearly light, washing the valley with gleam and shadow, transforming the peaks into luminous ghosts of themselves.

At the close of a full day in the Sawtooths, I went to sleep with the rocks of the mountains in my bones, the cries of hawks in my ears, and the smell of sage, juniper, and pine in my hair and on my clothes.

Lynna Howard lives in Shelley.

DIRECTIONS to the SAWTOOTH WILDERNESS

- Northeast from Boise on Highway 21 to Stanley: Stanley sits near the base of the northern end of the Sawtooth Range, at the intersection of Highways 21 and 75 (both highways are scenic routes).
- West from Idaho Falls on Highway 20 to Highway 75; north on 75 to Ketchum/Sun Valley; continue north over Galena Summit to the Sawtooth Valley. Stanley is sixty miles northwest of Sun Valley.
- Southwest, then west from the intersection of Highways 75 and 93, south of Challis. (Salmon is also on Highway 93, north of Challis.)
- North from Interstate 84, exit 173, Jerome; Highway 93 north to Shoshone and the intersection with Highway 75; north on 75.

For more information

Stanley Ranger Station

HC 64 Box 9900
Stanley, ID 83278
(208) 774.3000

SNRA Headquarters & Visitor Center

HC 64 Box 8291
Ketchum, ID 83340
(208) 727.5013 or (800) 260.5970
www.fs.fed.us/r4/sawtooth/

Campground reservations

(No reservations required for backcountry camping.)

National Recreation Reservation System

(877) 444.6777
www.reserveusa.com

On the second day of sun

By Joshua Foster

It happens this time every year. Usually on the second day of sun, with the ice pulling back gradually from its winter-long stay on the pavement, the mounds of the red and brown stuff, piled up along the roads, shrinks away willfully; the air warms enough that, even though it's coat weather, I wear a jacket; and I walk everywhere—*everywhere*; and the green grass on the fringes of the sidewalks and around the mailboxes looks coffee brown from the tires and the sneakers that carry the junk onto it; but it's showing now, at least the grass is showing, and I know from the sun that it's coming quickly.

It's not the spring that I wait for, or that worries me. And it's not the break from academic endeavors—far from it. It's the hard jab of metal on my belly as I lean over the grill of the pickup into the engine compartment, standing on the front bumper, manually working the gas line into the carburetor, yelling at Poncho or Chinto or Gumercindo, or to whomever, to try it one more time, one more time. Then it fires, blue-black smoke billows everywhere, and the pickup rattles like marbles in a

tin can. We head back to the shop for more pipe and maybe even some lunch. That's what it's bringing, this second day of sun, and I don't know how it makes me feel.

I will be the first member of my family to graduate with a bachelor's degree. The first—ever. My great-grandfather worked the rail lines, lost four and a half fingers repairing the elephant-sized steel wheels of the cars. His son, my grandfather Dewain, died at forty-two of kidney failure, when

his body rejected the kidney his younger sister donated to him. She outlived him by twenty years. When Dewain died, he left my father, then fourteen, and my uncle, twenty-one, with a few hundred acres of sagebrush and eight thousand dollars of debt apiece. They were chained to that farm—chained to the Ririe bench and the desert west of Osgood.

The chain that held them to the farm was one of those thirty-foot, rusty, inch-wide linked monstrosities



PHOTO BY DARREN HESTER/MORGHELE.COM

used to jerk a tractor out of a mud pit. But the brothers took it, wound it up, looped it, and roped cows until they had enough for their own herd. The brothers took the loop out, swung it wide, and caught land—some of the prettiest you’ll ever find, above the lulling Snake, on the high-mountain desert plains. They took that chain, and they dragged it behind them and worked the thin, dusty ground until it was night black and fertile; they attached a bucket to one end, lowered it down deep until they found water. When they brought it back up, they fed the water to the ground.

The chain now hangs loosely around both their well-muscled, tanned, and useful necks. The brothers—my father, my uncle—now do what they please. From that dusty, sagebrushed land, they have raised cash crops of potatoes and barley, herds of Black Angus, homes, and dozens of girls. They raised me, too—the only son, the only namesake—and that’s why the second day of sun seems to burn onto my back, even when it’s so cold I can still see my breath.

They’ll tell over a soda and peanuts that there are two types of smarts—street smarts and school smarts—and that one of those don’t matter much anyways. I always wondered why street smarts mattered at

all, since there were hardly streets in their world—just dirt roads that wind and drive endlessly through the Idaho hills. It’s clear they feel the same about school smarts—worthless in this country, worthless. They talk of the game, how to beat it. I’ll nod, and notice the sun is getting hotter, and it seems to be burning me completely, wholly.

This is how it goes—how it has gone—my entire life. It begins the second day of sun. The chain is light,

This is how it goes—
how it has gone—my
entire life. It begins
the second day of
sun. The chain is light,
hardly noticeable,
and I agree to do it
one more summer.

hardly noticeable,
and I agree to do it
one more summer.
*Anyway, I say, it’s
close and I’ve done it
forever and I like
the guys and the
Mexicans with those
tacos—incredible!—
and where else can I
get hours like these?*

*and who else will let me take whenever
off and go wherever? I mean, he is my
dad, right? it’s just like it’s always been,
and we’re both a little more mature
and maybe we can even make some
deals together, look at some type of
future together...*

The second day of sun seals the deal—clinches it tight. It’s inevitable, destiny.

But on the seventeenth day of sun it’s hot; I’m pushing fourteen hours in the tractor with no AC or a radio; then on the thirty-second I’m shoveling barley in a grain bin oven; then on the sixtieth I’m painting garage doors and telephone poles and fences in a long-sleeved shirt;

then on the one-hundred-and-eighth I’m underneath the silage truck—the *silage truck*—cutting off runners with the torch, and I don’t even have a pair of safety glasses or gloves; and on what seems like the seven-hundred-ninety-first day I yell at my dad—the man I call “pops” on Christmas and when I’m at school—and I tell him to take the whole farm and stick it, that I’m never coming back, ever. I leave early in my car with the windows down, and I’m swearing and dreaming about the city with an office close to a sushi bar and an indoor pool. When I get home, I box up my work clothes and hide them in the closet.

Until a day like today—the second day of sun—and I’m walking to school, soon to be a *college graduate*, and I see my breath and the grass around the mailbox posts and the shrinking snow piles, and without thinking, I call my dad.

I pause when he answers. “Hey, Pops, I was thinking that I have some weekends free—if you guys have work for me, maybe I’ll start coming down.”

And he pauses, and says, “That might not be a bad idea; we got a horse trailer that needs painted...”

The rest of the day, all I can think about is where I put my work-clothes box. When I leave school, the sun scorches the back of my neck. I turn the collar up on my thin jacket, shove my hands in its pockets, and quicken my step for home.

Joshua Foster lives and works in Rigby.

Trappin' gnats

By William Studebaker

I am a high-desert hiker, and when I'm hiking, flies and gnats often buzz around my head. If they don't bite, they fly into my eyes and ears. It's a frustration.

For years I've been trying to keep them away. I've used numerous insect repellants. They don't help much. I still have to swat and keep my mouth shut. On a single hike, I've swallowed a dozen gnats. They may be a good source of protein, but they are a gag to swallow.

During the winter, they're no problem. Thirty degrees above or twenty degrees below zero are certainly cures. And as solutions go, cold temperatures are good ones, but I generally hike during the mild months: April, May, June, September, October, and November. Midday temperatures are perfect for the nasty gnats and flies.

A few days ago, I read an ad that gave a possible solution. I've put a caution on it, however. The ad reads like many perfectly-unknown product sales pitches.

Consider this product, Urine Gone! "Darken the room and use

the included 'stain-detector' black light to let you find the urine messes."

Well, maybe not. Maybe you could install a black light and call the pee patches art.

Or Dryer Balls that lift and separate your clothes... by gender, I suppose.

Or the eye-catching "Tree Face" that lends a smile to your yard. Just place in your flower garden, and "Your 'cheery' tree will become the talk of the neighborhood!" It's less a tree and more a stump with an ethnic grin.

Or the Official Spider-Man Costume that "doesn't help kids scale walls, but they'll love looking like him." I wonder if the unofficial costume helps them scale walls. Check it out.

How about a piggy bank that squeals with delight, a credit-card style wallet light, or Nude

Aerobics—their "alternative fitness routine" is focused on getting you fit and firm. You see, one does have to have caution: don't just jump into nude aerobics without

considering the possible consequences. Your knees could begin to ache from the excitement. Your back muscles could get strained. Sundry appendages could be tortured. If

nudeness were the ideal strategy for exercise, why all of those athletic supporters and cross-your-heart shapelinesses?

For all of my alertness, something always catches my eye—like the book *How to Fix Damn Near Everything*.

How to Fix Damn Near Everything "takes the mystery out of appliances, power tools, plumbing, TVs—virtually everything."

There's hardly anything more attractive to me than solving mys-

On a single hike, I've swallowed a dozen gnats. They may be a good source of protein, but they are a gag to swallow.

teries, and not until I saw this book advertised did I contemplate the numerous mysteries that surround me. What about the microwave? *Hmmm. That's a good one.* What about the furnace/air conditioner, a.k.a. heat pump, that robs heat and cold from the same air? This bit of witchery reminds me of a folk tale.

Once upon a time, a stranger knocked on a poor farmer's door. The farmer's wife answered the door. The man at the door was very cold. He had been walking all day and a good share of the evening in freezing weather.

The wife bade him come in.

He was delighted with the warmth, but still, his hands were cold. He folded them into fists and blew through them

with his warm breath. As he did so, the farmer said, "What are you doing?"

"I'm warming my hands," said the stranger.

"We are poor," the farmer said. "We only have a little soup, but we would be more than happy to share it with you."

The stranger enthusiastically agreed. A warm bowl of soup would certainly help shed the day's misery.

He sat at the small, home-made table. The wife placed the soup in front of him and gave him a hand-carved spoon. The stranger dipped the spoon into the soup, and as he put it to his mouth, he decided it was too hot. So he blew across the spoonful of soup.

"What are you doing?" asked the farmer.

"I'm cooling my soup," said the stranger.

The farmer instantly stood up and said, "You must leave. Now."

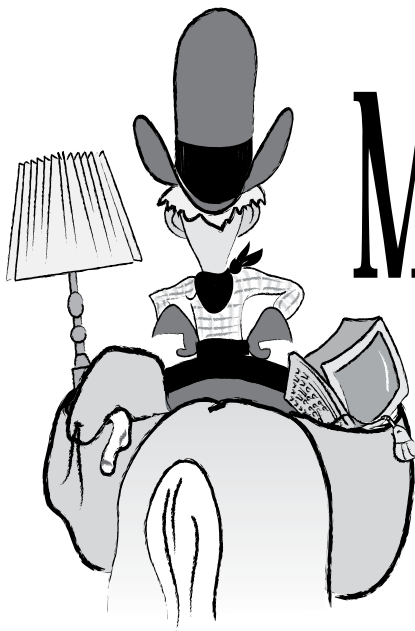
The stranger was astonished and asked the farmer why he was suddenly inhospitable and rude.

"I won't," said the farmer, "have anyone in my house who can blow hot and cold with the same breath."

You see, heat pumps are a mystery. They get hot and cold from the same air, too.

What about glue? It's another mystery.

This, of course, brings me back to the gnat and fly problem. The ad that caught my eye was



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ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

Buy Deerfly Patches that “stick to the top of a cap or hat and trap them nasty bugs in their tracks.” There is a caution, however: “Not recommended for long hair that might blow around and get stuck in the special adhesive.”

for Tred-not Deerfly Patches.

Flies (and gnats) “like to hide out in the shade and then swarm around your head before they pounce and bite.” So, buy Deerfly Patches that “stick to the top of a cap or hat and trap them nasty bugs in their tracks.” There is a caution, however: “Not recommended for long hair that might blow around and get stuck in the special adhesive.”

So, here it is. I buy a pack of twelve “flesh colored” Deerfly Patches, put one on my cap, and go for a hike. As I stroll up the ridge, the flying critters are attracted to the patch, and when they land they’re stuck to the sticky surface.

It’s worth a try.

I’ll be the envy of every hiker I meet. They’ll have a little, black swarm of flying insects around them, buzzing their faces and crawling in their hair. I won’t. My patch will be arched across my cap, littered with dead and dying flies and gnats.

I will be triumphant, stopping those annoying flies and gnats in their tracks. I will be jubilant with my crown of critters.

*William Studebaker
lives in Twin Falls.*

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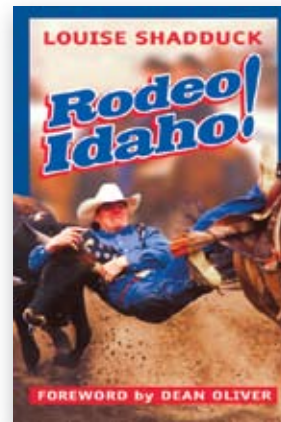
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Gram's story

Laura Carothers enjoys the fruits of her labor

By Cecil Hicks

If someone had told longtime north Idaho resident Laura Carothers that someday she would be involved in making a major motion picture, she would have laughed. But that's what happened in 1996 when Hollywood came knocking. Universal Studio site location scouts said they wanted to film scenes at Mirror Lake of a movie titled *Dante's Peak*, starring Pierce Brosnan and Linda Hamilton.

While most of the on-site location scenes were filmed in the Wallace area (about sixty air miles southeast of Laura's Mirror Lake home), they needed a mountain lake scene with a log home for the mother-in-law of Linda Hamilton's character. Trouble was, Laura didn't have a log home. The movie people told her that wasn't a problem; they'd just build an older-style log home on the location. So Laura signed a contract, and a Hollywood construction crew arrived in May. They set up office and living trailers on the property and built a log-home shell on site. The scenes required a bedroom, living room, mud room, and porch. The shell

was ready by early July for filming. Once the stars arrived, Laura recalled, the filming took only about four days.

When filming finally wrapped up and the movie crew departed, Laura got to keep the log cabin shell. She had the log home finished, which entailed wiring, plumbing, and adding a kitchen. Finally, she furnished it and moved in. It became her retirement home.

Two years later, in 1998, Hollywood returned to her

BELOW: The dock at Mirror Lake—*When the Fish and Game Department planted trout in Mirror Lake in 1954, Laura and Ward recognized a golden opportunity. They opened a campground and picnic area with a boat ramp and dock.*

OPPOSITE: Laura and her daughter, Margaret, greet fishing customers at Laura's Mirror Lake resort home. *This is the log home Hollywood crews built in 1996 for the movie Dante's Peak.*



PHOTO BY CECIL HICKS



PHOTO BY LEO CL. HICKS

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PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS

Mirror Lake home to film the low-budget movie about a giant turtle, *Everyone Loves Mel*, starring Ernest Borgnine.

Laura, affectionately known as “Gram,” was born in North Dakota November 19, 1919, to William and Sarah Eldred. She grew up in a large family with five brothers and three sisters. Like many rural families forced to leave their farms in the plains states during the Depression, they headed for greener pastures. Many of the uprooted farm families went to California, but her parents opted for the mountains, lakes, and evergreens of northern Idaho.

In the fall of 1936, when Laura was sixteen, her parents bought a logged-over, 160-acre farm a few miles south of Sagle, from the Humbird Lumber Company.

Laura recalled that her parents and a family friend had driven to the Northwest before their move to scout for new farmland. While they had checked out promising property in Washington, the farm in Idaho won out because it had a huge vegetable garden ready to harvest—a plus when trying to feed a huge family.

Rural families during the 1920s and 1930s weren’t blessed with the medicines available today for the care and health of children, and numerous ear infections had left Laura deaf in one ear. She tells the story of her younger brother Marvin, born in September 1920. He weighed only two pounds at birth, yet somehow he survived. Laura said he was so small, her mother’s wedding ring would fit over his hand to the wrist. A small tea

ABOVE: With the windswept nothingness of the Dust Bowl as a background, Laura’s family and friends pose for a photo during a Sunday outing in North Dakota. The ice cream maker is in the foreground.

OPPOSITE: Laura plays with her buggy and doll during a North Dakota winter.

OPPOSITE INSET: Laura, 15, with her sister, Rosemary.

cup would fit on his head like a cap. Right after he was born, instead of putting him in a crib to sleep, they kept him in a small box wrapped in a blanket and placed it on the oven door of the wood cook stove in the kitchen. It worked like an incubator.

At sixteen, Laura left her childhood behind when her family departed for Idaho and a new life. They

shipped household items, two ponies, and her pets—six sheep—on the Union Pacific Railroad. To help her parents pay for the move, she sold a small farmhouse given to her by her grandfather. A couple of her older brothers accompanied the household items and animals on the train, while the rest of the family piled into a Chevy truck and a Nash car and convoyed. At night they camped out on the lawns of one-room schoolhouses along the route so she and her siblings could enjoy playing on the

Like many rural families forced to leave their farms in the plains states during the Depression, they headed for greener pastures ... her parents opted for the mountains, lakes, and evergreens of northern Idaho.

swings and other toys. They also had access to the other schoolyard amenity—the outhouse.

It wasn't long before they'd settled in on their new farm. The property had a two-room main house and a three-room bunkhouse. It also had a big barn to hold winter hay.

Soon after, in 1937, Ward Carothers, who lived on a neighboring farm bordering Mirror Lake, asked her

modern convenience of running water in the kitchen. They later built an indoor bathroom. Other buildings included two large barns, two hen houses, a brooder house for raising some three hundred baby chicks, an ice-house, a woodshed, a Model-T garage, and a food-storage cellar built into a hillside.

Their farm consisted of a full section of land—640 acres. They had two hay meadows sowed with mixed grass and clover that provided winter food for the beef cattle and milk cows. They milked about ten Holsteins by

hand and raised about thirteen Black Angus cattle for beef. They were busy on the farm from sunup to sundown, between milking the cows (twice a day, every day), feeding the animals, gardening, canning the vegetable harvest, cleaning the house, washing clothes by hand, cooking, hay-

ing, and logging with their two draft horses. Electricity wasn't extended to the farm until the late 1940s.

Summer haying season was a busy time on the farm. The two meadows had to be cut with a horse-drawn mower, then a rake wind-rowed the hay. When the hay was dry, it was pitched into a wagon by hand and hauled to the barn where it was offloaded.

to help care for his sick mother, Margaret. Laura took the job, and for the next few years, cared for Mrs. Carothers until she passed away.

In January 1941, at twenty-one, her stay at the Carothers' Mirror Lake homestead became permanent when she and Ward married. Her new home was larger than her folks' house. It had three bedrooms and the



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS

profile

Logging was also time-consuming. They dropped the trees using a six-foot, two-person handsaw and trimmed off the tree limbs with an axe or saw. They sawed the tree trunks into lengths the draft horses could drag to a landing site. Then they loaded the logs onto a truck and hauled them to a

Daughter Margaret remembers her parents spending many happy hours trolling for fish on Mirror Lake, even in stormy weather. Her parents would continue to row “just one more time” around the lake...



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS

mill, where they were sold for processing into lumber.

In winter, Ward cut large blocks of ice from Mirror Lake. He loaded the ice blocks on a sled pulled to the ice house by the draft horses for storage.

A few years later, they expanded their farming operations when they bought several hundred acres of adjoining land, including an apple orchard. They had not only a larger farm to work, but their busy life became busier when they began raising a family. They had three children—Arthur, Andrew, and Margaret.

Laura gave birth to her sons at

home; her mother delivered Andrew because the doctor didn't arrive on time. In those days, doctors made house calls, and most babies were delivered at home unless there were complications. Her daughter, Margaret, was the only child born in a hospital. After each delivery, her mother ordered Laura to stay in bed for ten days. It was believed, at the time, that her paternal grandmother had died from getting out of bed too soon and going back to work.

Being a farm wife

and raising a family involved a lot of hard work, but when she had free time, Laura enjoyed playing cards, putting together jigsaw puzzles, and fishing. She had a reputation as the best fisherman in the family. Ward was the only one who could (almost) keep up with her fishing ability.

She loved going on family fishing outings to Talache Landing, a few miles from their farm on the west shores of Lake Pend Oreille. Their method of fishing, without a motorboat, consisted of tying a rope to a tree on shore, rowing their twelve-foot rowboat out about one hundred feet, then dropping an anchor off the bow. They fished with hand lines and could catch up to fifty bluebacks



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CAROTHERS

OPPOSITE INSET: Ward and Laura visit relatives in Yakima, Washington.

OPPOSITE: Ward and Laura with their son, Arthur, in 1942.

ABOVE: Just one more time—Ward and Laura row on Mirror Lake in their homemade wooden boats in 1958. Niece Phyllis is in the boat with Ward, and daughter Margaret is in the third boat by herself.

(Kokanee) per person a day, or one hundred total fish with a commercial license.

Besides being a good fisherman, Laura was a crack-shot with the rifle and brought in plenty of whitetail deer.

Daughter Margaret remembers her parents spending many happy hours trolling for fish on Mirror Lake, even in stormy weather. Her parents would continue to row “just one more time” around the lake, saying there was plenty of time to get to shore and out of a storm. Often the “one more time” would turn into a couple more hours of fishing.

Laura never did learn to swim, and once flipped and swamped the rowboat while it was anchored out from shore. When she went overboard, she managed to grab a flotation cushion. A nephew who saw the incident rowed out from Talache Landing to drag her out of the water.

Years later, when she took

Margaret into Sandpoint for swimming lessons, Laura tried to learn to swim to please her daughter, but to no avail. One day when they returned from swimming lessons, Margaret told her dad, “Mommy learned how to swim one inch today.”

In the fall of 1953, the Fish and Game Department poisoned Mirror Lake to rid it of an overabundance of bass and perch. The next spring, they replanted it with trout. As the lake covered ninety acres, Ward and Laura decided this would be a good time to make some extra income by opening a campground and picnic area with a dock and boat ramp, and offering boat rentals. This endeavor took about three years to complete. Laura

profile

remembers that during winter months, when most of the farming work slowed down, she and Ward were busy building wooden rowboats in the living room.

They constructed ten twelve-foot, wooden rowboats.

For twenty-nine years, Laura and Ward lived a busy and rewarding life running the family farm, raising kids, and

helping customers at their Mirror Lake Resort Campground. Tragedy struck in 1970, however, when Ward died in an accident. He was helping someone pull their loaded boat trailer up the boat ramp when the trailer struck him, knocked him down, and ran over him.

No stranger to power tools and equipment, Laura discovered she had a knack for fixing farm machinery. She became the family mechanic, repairing tractors after the draft horses were replaced in the 1950s.

Over the years, Laura has helped many of her elderly neighbors by taking them shopping or for medical trips. One winter day, she stopped in to check on Katharine Keene, who lived near Talache on Grouse Mountain about five miles away. Laura brought groceries and hiked in over the snow-

At eighty-six, Laura is retired, but still enjoys greeting and helping resort and campground customers. She also enjoys her hobbies—reading, knitting, and crocheting.

filled lane from the county road two miles away. She found Katharine very ill. Katharine said she would be fine, but Laura knew

better. She walked back out to the road, drove home, and returned later, driving their tractor through the snow. A wooden pallet had been attached to the back of the tractor for hauling, and someone could sit on it for a ride. Laura bundled Katharine up, set her on the pallet, and drove out to her waiting car. She drove Katharine to the hospital, where

she was admitted. If it hadn't been for Laura's concern, Katharine might have died that winter.

At eighty-six, Laura is retired but still enjoys greeting and helping resort and campground customers. She also enjoys her hobbies—reading, knitting, and crocheting. She enjoys caring for her family, and she has set a goal of making quilts for each of her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and a neighbor.

Yes, Laura Carothers has led a hard-working, but rewarding, life. Who knows—someday maybe even her great-great-grandchildren will be calling her Gram.

Cecil Hicks lives in Sandpoint.

Laura holds her great-granddaughter, Alaura Syth, during a party for Alaura's second birthday in August 2003.



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H O R S E S H O E

PHOTO BY BONNIE FRY





BEND

Horseshoe Bend, with the river and school in the foreground. The canal on the left feeds the power plant, and the river is visible behind the trees on the far side of town. Horseshoe Bend was developed on what began as the Garner Miner farm.

By Members of the Scenic Payette River Historical Society

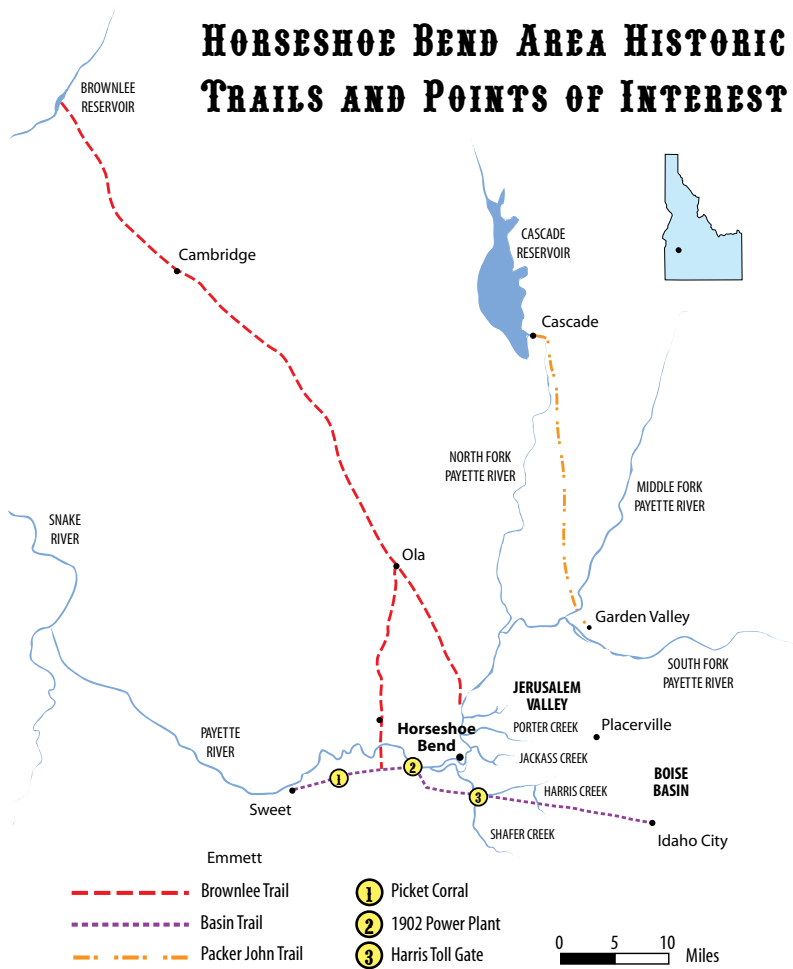
You're heading north from Boise on Highway 55, anxious to get to the mountains for a day of fun. The sign says "Scenic Payette River Byway." *Hmmm. These sage-covered hills don't look so scenic to me.* Then you reach the summit, 4,200 feet above sea level. As you begin your descent, far below appears a beautiful valley surrounded by snow-capped mountains. A peaceful little town lies nestled in the horseshoe-shaped bend of the pristine river as it winds its way through the valley floor. You catch your breath at the beauty ahead as you coast down the steep grade to 2,400 feet only six miles away.

WELCOME TO HORSESHOE BEND!

As you cross the river bridge and enter the small town, your impatience grows, and you grumble at the 25 mph speed limit. *What was that population anyway, seven hundred and something?* You reach the flat ground beyond town and accelerate, happily on your way. Perhaps without realizing it, you have just driven through a gateway to some of the richest history in Idaho.

Horseshoe Bend has long been a hard-edged, working-man's town, steeped in oral history shared in the local churches, bars, and on Grandpa's knee. Many homesteaders made their living off the land as loggers, miners, millers, ranchers, and truck farmers; their "work or starve" mentality still exists among many of the locals today. Along with the strong work ethic, there is a yearning for fun that rallies the community together. In days gone by, residents would gather for Fourth of July picnics, Logger's Day celebrations, and Let'er Bucks in which a circle of the spectators' cars created a makeshift rodeo arena. These days, community gatherings often center on school activities, organizations, and "liars' tables" at the coffee shops.

HORSESHOE BEND AREA HISTORIC TRAILS AND POINTS OF INTEREST



August 2, 1862, when Fogus discovered gold. With this, the gold rush began.

Men came on horseback, with pack trains of mules, or by foot, streaming into the Boise Basin by the thousands. Organized pack companies were soon bringing passengers and merchandise, while many came on their own, carrying their goods on their backs. And come they did, by way of the river valleys and old Indian trails, including the Brownlee Trail, Basin Trail, and Packer John Trail.

After prospectors reached the Horseshoe Bend valley, they struggled by way of Jackass Creek, Porter Creek, and Shafer Creek, over the rugged and steep trails into the Boise Basin's gold fields. Towns in the basin grew overnight. Soon, 100,000 people lived in tent cities that emerged between Placerville and Idaho City as they toiled for the precious yellow metal.

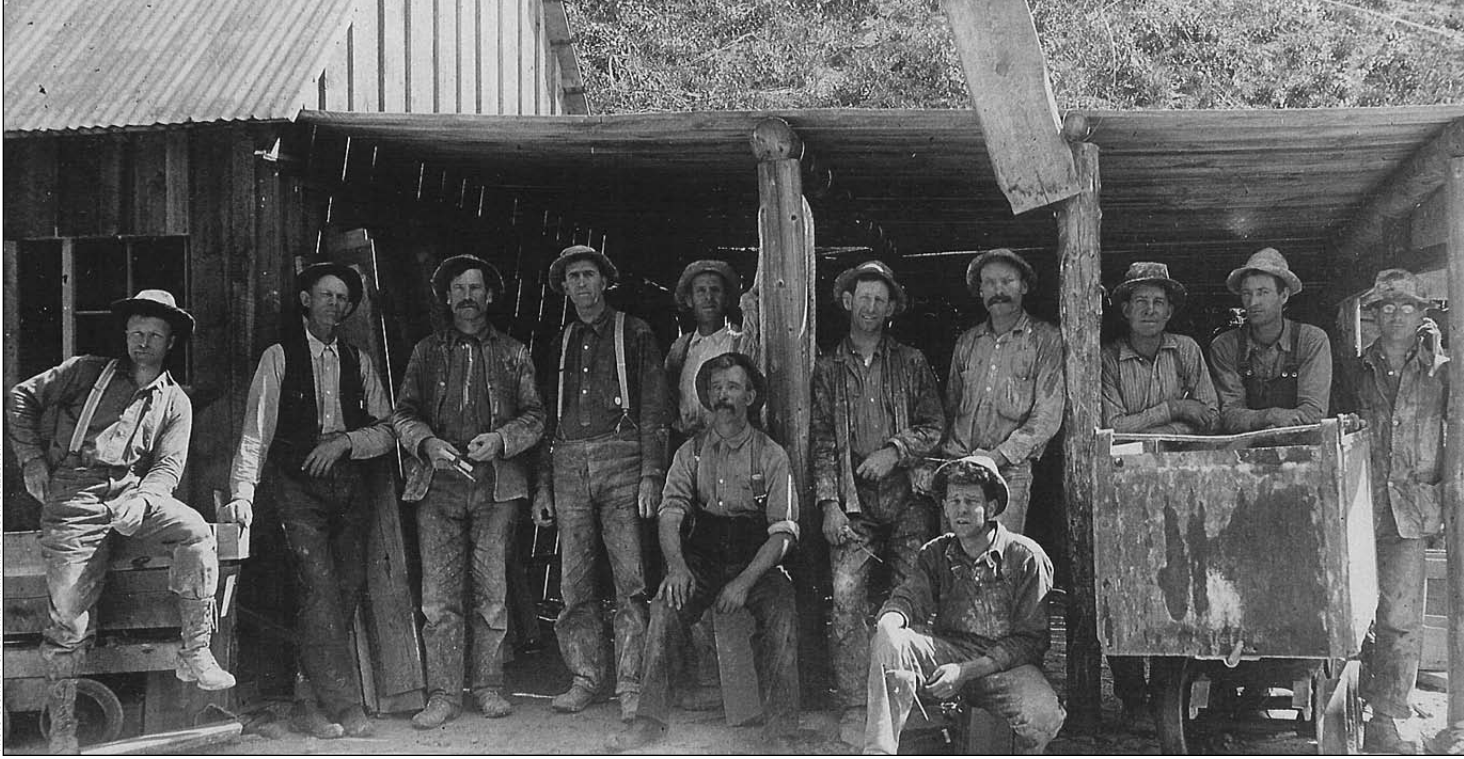
Winters in the basin were harsh, and very little food was available. Many miners crossed back to the Horseshoe Bend valley to wait out the severe weather. They found that the lush grasses of the valley were perfect for grazing, and the rich soil along the tributaries of the Payette River grew incredible crops. Ranchers soon had livestock grazing the hills and valleys, while farms sprang up along the creeks. Descendants of many of those early ranchers graze cattle on the same lands today.

GOLD RUSH SPURS ECONOMIC BOOM

The Northern Shoshone and Northern Paiute Indians inhabited Horseshoe Bend before white men settled in the area (although trade route trails through Horseshoe Bend have yielded artifacts from several different tribes). The tribes camped in the valley and lived on the bountiful food supply. Wild game was plentiful, camas root grew in enormous patches, and the river teemed with salmon. The earliest white men were trappers gathering furs, coexisting peacefully with the Indian tribes.

But that life was destined to disappear. "Gold! We found gold!" was the cry that changed the country forever. George Grimes, Moses Splawn, and D.H. Fogus, prospectors from Florence, Idaho, heard from an Indian that gold could be found in abundance in the Boise Basin, just east of Horseshoe Bend. Together they formed the Grimes Party and traveled east to the basin, realizing their dream on





ABOVE: A crew of miners working in the Mountain Chief Mine in the Boise Basin. Many of these men lived in Horseshoe Bend. Their families usually stayed in the valley while they worked the mines.

OPPOSITE: The Harris Toll Gate was built by Felix Harris. The family operated the toll gate from the front porch of their home. This photo, taken about 1910, shows members of the Fry family, the last owner-operators of the gate before the county took it over by way of eminent domain.

THEIR OWN KIND OF PAY DIRT

Some of those who remained in Horseshoe Bend hit their own kind of pay dirt by selling produce to the hungry miners. William J. McConnell, who became Idaho's second governor and later a U.S. senator, planted a crop of onions in the Jerusalem area with his partner, John Porter. They packed a load over the mountain and sold them to the hungry miners, returning with a pocketful of gold dust. This encouraged the farmers, and they expanded their produce-growing to berries, vegetables, and watermelons, which sold for eight dollars each. As farming became a more reliable source of income than mining, the valley came alive with orchards, gardens, and grain fields.

With a steady stream of heavily loaded pack wagons heading into the basin and miners traveling with their gold dust, it didn't take long for the criminal element to creep into

the area. Outlaws seized the opportunity, and one such group of thieves became quite well organized. They were dubbed the Picket Corral Gang, after the corral-shaped rock canyon near Emmett where they were headquartered. The devastation of mass robbing and rustling finally reached a point of crisis for those trying to make an honest living, and with little help from corrupt local law enforcement, the frustrated citizens took matters into their own hands. When the gang rustled horses and mules from William J. McConnell and other farmers in the Jerusalem area, the angry men pursued the band of thieves to Oregon and retrieved their animals. Having heard of their success, other residents joined in their efforts and formed the Payette Vigilance Committee with McConnell as its leader. Within a year, the outlaws were driven out, bringing peace back to the valley.

Meanwhile, the town soon to be known as Horseshoe Bend was taking shape. Originally named Warrinersville after the first postmaster in 1865, the name was changed to Horse Shoe Bend two years later, and eventually slightly changed again to the current two-word spelling. In 1872, Frank R. Starr, city editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, came to the area to visit relatives and reported on what he called "the picturesque village of Horse Shoe Bend," saying, "The town is regularly laid out, having a hotel, church, sawmill, schoolhouse, blacksmith shop, etc., and is called the Arcadia of Idaho."

A RACE TO BUILD A RAILROAD

In 1864, the first bridge across the Payette River in Horseshoe Bend was built on the north end of town. With the newfound accessibility, the north end experienced growth with a hotel and several businesses sprouting up. When rumors started flying about the coming railroad, the price of lots on the north end skyrocketed to an alarming five hundred dollars to eight hundred dollars per lot. This angered many businessmen who instead chose to purchase property at the south end of town for a more reasonable fifty dollars to seventy-five dollars per lot. Some tore down their buildings and moved them to the south end while others rebuilt; the town on the south bank of the river flourished for many years.

As the town grew, so did the need for lumber to meet the demands for new houses, mines, and businesses. Sawmills cropped up on the drainage of nearly every tributary on the Payette. Log drives on the river were a means to get logs to the mills from as far upstream as Lowman and Smiths Ferry to as far downstream as Horseshoe Bend and Payette. Men called “river hogs” used small boats to keep the drives running smoothly and free of logjams. This was very dangerous work that required men of strength, endurance, and courage to perform. Some lost their lives and were buried along the river wherever the mishap occurred; eight men drowned in one particular drive. The river hogs required layers of heavy woolen clothing, spiked boots, and five hot meals a day to keep working in the cold waters of the Payette River.

Before long, the beautiful stands of ponderosa pine and Douglas fir trees caught the eye of the railroads. A race began in earnest to build tracks into the timber country to haul logs to the mills. The railroad established camps for surveyors, grading crews, and track layers; the workers became part of the community as they patronized local establishments. They even organized baseball teams to play in tournaments against Horseshoe Bend teams. By



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAILRO LOGGING

1912, the railroad had arrived, and log drives on the Payette were discontinued.

The established railroad also became the way of choice for shipping livestock long distances. Cattlemen and women pushed the cows on horseback into the high mountain country in the spring to graze on the tall grasses and raise their calves. In the fall, the cows were gathered and brought back to the valley, where some were loaded onto railcars and sold. The spring cattle drives were the longest. The riders had to stay up late to make sure calves didn't run back to the last place they nursed their mothers. They were up before daylight to start on the trail again. It took seven days to travel one hundred miles in the spring, but only three days to come back in the fall when the calves were bigger. The riders would ask the trail boss, “How much farther?” and he would yell back, “Until you want to sit down and bawl and then back again!”

Throughout most of the 1900s, the mainstay of



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAILRO LOGGING



OPPOSITE AND ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Clem Newell**, a 'pond monkey' with the sawmill, wins the log burling contest at the county fair; **Cowboys**— (left to right) Perry Fry, George Winfield, Henry Reid, Bill Foss, Wilfred Quinn, George Sherill, Ralph Noland, and Bert Bodie, about 1910; **Cowgirls**— Anna Olsen Fry (far right) is the only cowgirl identified, about 1915.



OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: **Horse teams** pulled the logs down greased chutes to the landing areas, where they were loaded onto train cars.

BELOW: **The log mill and pond**— The pond was used to soak some of the dirt off the logs.

Horseshoe Bend was the sawmill run by Hoff Lumber Company and later by Boise Cascade Company. Most locals, as many as five hundred employees, worked at the mill. The mill whistle served as a means of communication for the entire community; everyone knew which whistles signaled an accident in town, a fire, or the noon hour. The school-aged kids especially benefited from the ten-minute warning whistle before the five o'clock shift ended, because they knew to get off the streets and beat their parents home. During this era, the town was almost self-sufficient, enjoying steady employment, convenient grocery stores, gas stations with full-time mechanics, and a bank. The mill's closing in the 1990s created a community of commuters, as folks began making the trek over the hill for employment in the Treasure Valley.

HORSESHOE BEND TODAY

Things have changed in Horseshoe Bend. A few decades ago, a person had to wait to see a car coming through town. Now, people have to wait to get across the street. Numerous one-room

schoolhouses have been replaced by a single school district in the middle of town, servicing kindergarten through twelfth grade. The river no longer transports logs. Instead, the beautiful Payette River is a playground for whitewater enthusiasts who come from near and far to kayak, raft, and tube in the world-renowned rapids. The annual Whitewater Rodeo each summer, a series of kayaking events, is one of their favorites. While snowshoeing used to be the only way to deliver mail during the treacherous winters in the basin, it is now a favorite winter recreation activity, along with snowmobiling and cross-country skiing.

The locals don't pack much produce out of town anymore, but popular local restaurants are packed on weekends, as hungry travelers make this a planned stop. The railroad no longer transports timber and livestock; it carries sightseers along the winding banks of the river, allowing them to view the beautiful scenery and wildlife, including bald eagles, deer, and elk. The city park, once used only for small gatherings, now hosts the ever-popular





PHOTO BY FRAN HEFNER

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: **Through the trestle and bridge on the railroad tracks, one can see the formidable hills the gold-seekers had to cross to get to the Boise Basin; The Logger's Day crowd roared as this mud bog racer took a big spill. He was caked with mud everywhere but under his helmet. He got up, tipped his three-wheeler back up, and rode off as if nothing had happened.**

BELOW: **How ironic**—A train goes through town with a load of lumber during the last Logger's Day celebration.

OPPOSITE: **The Cougar Mountain Line heads back from Banks on a summer day in 2005 in the Payette River Canyon.**

annual Banjo Festival. Hundreds of visitors enjoy food, craft, and service vendors while they delight in the melodies of the talented musicians.

HORSESHOE BEND TOMORROW

This small town has not seen the end of change. Development of the wide, open spaces seems inevitable, as many people find the fresh air and slower pace appealing, and the new four-lane highway to Boise makes



PHOTO BY FRAN HEFNER



PHOTO BY FRAN HEFNER

employment and amenities convenient. Plans are under way to reinvent the old Boise Cascade mill site into a town square with a city hall, motel, restaurant, log home factory, and subdivisions. New houses are being built on the outskirts north and south of town. The recent construction of Tamarack Resort in Donnelly and the possible development of Spring Valley between Horseshoe Bend and Boise are beginning to close the gap between this isolated little town and the rest of civilization.

Amid the growth, Horseshoe Bend hangs on to the core values on which the town was built. There are those who make a living carrying a chainsaw in the woods and those who ride horseback while they tend to their livestock. There are those who continue to irrigate their farmland with hand lines and resist the urge to subdivide. The rugged character lives on. Changes are not met without some resistance, but Horseshoe Bend—ever resilient—knows nothing if not how to adapt and to utilize its resources to prosper.

There is more to this little town than meets the eye. The next time you come sailing down the hill and find yourself frustrated at the bottleneck at the bottom, slow down, relax, and look around. Notice the rafts on the river, think of the river hogs from the log drives of the past, and think of Horseshoe Bend, the little town with a big history.

Written by members of the Scenic Payette River Historical Society: Fran Hefner, Cora Larson, Deb Marks, Jess Cooper, and Sandy Boyington.

The historical society sends special thanks to those who contributed photographs and encouragement.



HORSESHOE BEND

PHOTO BY FRAN HEFNER

Calendar of Events

Feb.	tba	PTA Founders Day Potluck, School Cafeteria
Mar.	Continuous Sat. before Easter	Thunder Mountain Train Rides, Old Mill Site Easter Egg Hunt, School
April	tba	Heritage Day, School
May	1st weekend	Show & Shine Car Show, Chevron
June	3-4	Annual Banjo Festival, City Park
July	4 4 tba	Fireworks Auction, City Park Fireworks Display, Ballpark Whitewater Rodeo, Payette River
Aug.	3rd weekend	Pioneer Picnic, City Park
Nov.	Sat. before Thanksgiving Sat. before Thanksgiving tba	American Legion Turkey Shoot Thanksgiving Baskets Ladies Club Christmas Bazaar, Ladies Club Hall
Dec.	tba Sat. before Christmas Sat. before Christmas tba	Outdoor Lighting Contest Bonfire with Santa & Treats, Downtown Christmas Baskets Christmas in a Stable, Hwy. 55 near Weigh Station

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Syringa

Idaho's flower

By Betty Derig

When you take a springtime drive through Idaho's mountains, you're apt to see splashes of white flowering shrubs lighting up the dark green woods. If the air is deliciously scented (like orange blossoms), take a second look. These may be syringas.

The flowers bloom on shrubs that grow from three to ten feet tall with flowers that bloom in clusters along the ends of lateral branches. Each flower in the cluster may be one to two inches wide with four symmetrical petals centered by many golden stamens.

Meriwether Lewis found this native beauty in Nez Perce country, along the Clearwater River, May 4, 1806, as the expedition was on its return trip to the East. Lewis collected a specimen here, and today it resides in the Lewis and Clark Herbarium in Philadelphia.

This was a plant new to science, and the job of naming it (along with more than 120 others discovered by Lewis and Clark), fell to well-known botanist Frederick Pursh. He named it *Philadelphus lewisii* and placed it in the Hydrangea family. The genus name, *Philadelphus*, is for the Egyptian, Ptolemy II

Philadelphus, and the species name, *lewisii*, honors Meriwether Lewis. Botanists have recently changed the family name to *Philadelphaea*.

The common name, *syringa*, is a bit of a mystery as it is also the scientific name for lilac. The other common name, Lewis's mockorange, seems more logical.

The importance of *syringa* to Idaho landscape was appreciated early on by Emma Edwards Green, who created the state seal in 1890. She included a *syringa* in the design, and the legislature agreed it would be a special symbol for the new state. But it was 1931 before lawmakers officially named *syringa* the state flower.

Syringa grows in the Rocky Mountains of Idaho and Montana, throughout the Pacific Northwest and south to California. It likes open woods and the edges of coniferous forests, where it is commonly found growing with chokecherry and serviceberry bush-

es. When in bloom, serviceberry is often mistaken for *syringa*. After a trip to the mountains, one might exclaim, "Oh! I saw a whole mountainside of *syringa*." Well, maybe. Maybe not. The serviceberry shrub resembles the *syringa* in size and growing habit, with white flowers that bloom in clusters, but each flower has five narrow petals—slightly twisted, so that the whole arrangement takes on a disheveled appearance. This is quite in contrast to the neat, symmetrical pattern of the *syringa* with its golden center.

RIGHT: *Syringas* in bloom can resemble a snow-covered hillside.

OPPOSITE: *Syringa* blossoms are distinguished by their neat, symmetrical petals and rich orange fragrance.



PHOTO BY BETTY DERIG

featured foliage



PHOTO BY BETTY DERIG

A wide range of Indians throughout the Northwest used syringa in creative ways for medicines, tools, and basketry. Daniel Moerman, author of *Native American Ethnobotany*, outlined some of these uses. For instance, they used the very strong, straight branches to make bows and arrows, digging sticks, and fishing harpoons, as well as combs and pipes. Sometimes they boiled leaves to make a medicinal decoction to relieve respiratory problems. They made salves from dried leaves mixed with bear grease or pitch to apply to sores, swellings, eczema, and even hemorrhoids. The Thompson Indians in northern Idaho and southern Canada used the young wood in basketry and cleverly fashioned knitting needles from likely pieces. Many groups boiled the syringa leaves to a frothy lather to use for washing. It was generally believed that when the bloom was heavy on the syringa, the groundhog was fat.

Today, Lewis's mockorange is popular as a landscape plant. It takes only a moderate amount of water and gives an abundance of beauty. Plant one by the back door for a delicious experience in aromatherapy.

Betty Derig lives in Weiser.

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The one that got away

By Peggy Parks

I've never claimed to be a great photographer, but as a small-town weekly newspaper publisher, I often had to take photos as well as perform other duties.

Rodeo photos were my thing. I did pretty well, if I do say so myself, considering that the camera had a manual focus and no motor drive. I always managed to get a couple of good action shots to accompany the story.

Bull riding is the most exciting event of any rodeo. I always tried to get one shot as soon as the bull and rider came out of the chute. Then I'd keep the lens trained on the rider, focusing as he traversed the arena, waiting for that split second when he'd lose his seat and get bucked off.

I thought I was pretty good. That is, until the May 1995 Bull-A-Rama in Challis.

That day, one rider (I don't remember his name or even if he

Gary Miller captured this shot of the action—and the author—who can be spotted in the stands wearing a white shirt.



PHOTO BY GARY MILLER

one spud short

completed the ride) came out of the chute, and I got my standard two pictures. He was off the bull and was safe, so I relaxed and put the camera on my lap, collapsing the telephoto lens at the same time.

Suddenly, right in front of me, the bull turned on the rodeo clown and tossed him in the air—not once, but three times. By the time I regained my composure and refocused the camera, it was over.

“Did you get that?” someone asked.

“No, afraid not,” I answered.

But the rodeo photographer, Gary Miller, wasn't so slow.

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A couple of weeks later, a member of the rodeo committee brought me a copy of the photographer's photo. It was great. He had captured the bull tossing the clown in the air. He had also captured me in the background, looking stupid with my mouth wide open and the camera on my lap.

Peggy Parks lives in Challis. She was owner, publisher, and editor of The Challis Messenger for thirty-two years.



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Mayflies

Learning the language of rivers

By Rick Kmetz

When the rain comes all at once in a heap of blackness, oil-slicking a path across the Snake River Plain's galaxy of open space, thick and furious, I begin a ritual act of movement, a recursive pattern, a generational pull, a tradition I recognize as my father's and grandfather's—marrow in my bones. I always return to rivers.

I am trailing the rain on I-15, heading north toward the South Fork of the Snake River, crossing the plain's broken basalt beds, watching newly washed sage and juniper pass. I drive with the window down, letting the sage-stung air work its way through the cab and into my nostrils, almost sugary, to my lungs. The bulk of the storm is still bullying up the river, probably almost to Swan Valley by now. I drive faster with hope that the first cold rain of fall will trigger a mayfly hatch, and that the cutthroats will move from deep pockets to shallows to feed on the tiny insects. I have been longing for rain, for river water.

Since my son's birth two years ago, I have been thinking more about my father, nearly twenty years after his death. I have been trying to make connections with myself as a boy, sitting next to him in his little white truck, the sweetness of

melted M&Ms wafting through the cab, on our way out to fish the Little Lost or Salmon rivers, or any number of little streams he had learned to fish with his father. I want to remember what it was like to be my father's son.

As I drive, I hold my hand out the window and feel the rain slap against my palm, remembering those long-ago trips with my father across the plain, his stories, his love for this landscape, his attraction to rivers. Such thoughts, for me, accompany the renewal of rain. Even if only temporary, rain breathes oxygen to the high Idaho desert, a landscape choking to death. A good storm and some warm afternoon sun cause the volcanic soil to become cool and dark, rich with possibility, so musky it smells of potting soil; where dust once

draped the brush and bunchgrass, the desert plants show bright and clean. Yet maybe nothing is more short-lived than the effects of rain on the desert. Memories of my father and me come this way in brief, precise moments when everything is vivid but unclear.

I turn off the road that parallels the South Fork and slosh through rain puddles, noticing how the runoff washes the river's freestone belly in clouds of silt. The front of the storm has moved through here, on the lower stretches below the canyon, as it makes its way through the dry-farmed benches and

Neal Callister, the author's brother, fishes the South Fork of the Snake River, upstream from Falls Creek Falls.



PHOTO BY RICK KMETZ

bunched-up foothills near Swan Valley. I watch the storm arch above me, curving like a longbow from where I stand to where it falls upstream in dark streaks, plunging on the stone-covered wall of Palisades Dam.

The cottonwood river bottoms hold still and dark. The osprey that home-steads on top of the old railroad bridge spanning the width of the river, just below my fishing hole, hunkers down. The mayflies, the osprey, the beavers, even the trout await the pale breaks tailing the bulk of the storm, bringing patches of reds and yellows, before they emerge. The complexity of life on the South Fork reduced to the simplicity of waiting—a pastime I have come to know as calm survival.

I lean on the thick trunk of a cottonwood growing on the high bank and watch the South Fork slide under the railroad bridge, remembering my father's instructions on reading water. "The river tells you things," he would say. "It's just that you have to know what it says." He would crouch down as he pointed to a place where the fish were probably lying. And then he would take my fishing rod and cast a line where he had pointed. In the nostalgia of memory, I remember him always reeling in a fish bigger than I ever caught.

My father had an uncanny intuition for knowing what a river says. I suspect that being born and raised mere feet from the Salmon River—hearing its intonation, dissonance, seasonal pitch, as the cadence for all his childhood memories—he learned the language of rivers, the meaning of its movement, the grace,

the quick runs and gentle riffles, the deep, turbid pools and shallow, clean lines of water flowing over stone.

But he also taught me that reading a river is never the same. "Just because that little run had a fish in it last time doesn't mean he's still there," he told me on one occasion when I was getting skunked. Looking back, I take this as the literal truth that you cannot fish the same river twice, as the Greek philosopher

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Heraclitus so gracefully observed. But for me, and maybe my father, too, this could also mean that the river tells you different things at different points in your life.

I look down into a fast little run where the trout will eventually begin feeding. I remember the first time I went fishing after my father's death, how even in the utter nothingness of this new perspective, I found a nice boulder with concentric circles rising behind it. It turned out to be a hell of a nice trout. And the time I crawled up the river's tall bank and propped a shoulder on the cottonwood to watch

my friends cast in the moonlight to boiling trout, anticipating my fiancée's arrival from Montana later that night—this time to stay for keeps. Or the countless evenings I have spent bathed in dusk. Mayflies emerging in clouds, after the rains had come, trout sipping them as they glided by. And, of course, I remember the first time I came to the river after my son was born.

I wrap my fishing vest over my shoulders and pull a mayfly box from my chest pocket. I study the assortment of flies—mahogany extended bodies, pale yellow spinners, pink emergers—all tied precisely, yet clumsy and awkward compared to the elegance of naturals. I snag a cottonwood limb hanging low and inspect under the leaves for mature mayflies. Two huddle under the protective curl of a large leaf, and I pluck it from the branch, holding it in my lap. The mayflies crawl from the leaf to my hand, stretch their transparent wings straight above their bodies, and take flight for the river. They are early hatchers, mid-morning perhaps, waiting for the rain to quit.

The scientific name for mayflies is Ephemeroptera, which is derived from Latin and Greek and is translated as a momentary or short-lived winged flyer. Mayflies have one of the shortest adult life spans of any insect, sometimes living only a few hours, but rarely more than a day. Mayflies live on the bottom of the river, dwelling under rocks for as long as a year before a shift in water temperature and the right amount of sunlight signals the time to emerge. When the conditions are right, they swim to the surface, break free of their sparkling shucks, raise their cloudy, mottled wings straight and high,

water ways

and take flight for the nearest tree. There they will molt again, shedding skin from their wings, leaving them shiny and clear. The mayflies return to the river to mate, lay eggs, and die—a dance so intricate it takes a year to prepare and less than a day to perform.

I pull on my waders, rig my rod, tie on my boots, and splash through the chocolate rain puddles, watching the storm move through the upper reaches of the South Fork on its way to Jackson Hole. The upper stretches of the river begin as a tailwater river below Palisades Dam, meandering through Swan Valley before entering the carved-out sections of the canyon, where the river brushes against sheer cliffs and divides a volcanic plateau before eventually spilling onto the Snake River Plain. It is a working river, to be sure, and in the peak of summer the river swells to capacity and carries the water that will irrigate the crops so important in southeast Idaho.

But by early fall, when the cold rains come and the cottonwoods turn, many of the channels and more shallow runs lie bare and dry. Only the main channels remain, though the water levels still fluctuate by the foot in a day's time.

I walk through the river and hold onto the giant cottonwood that washed up here, roots and all, when the South Fork flooded a few years ago. It guides my steps along the shallow gravel bar of the river, its smooth skin damp and cold. I watch the osprey move in its nest atop the old railroad bridge. It rises and flies toward the cottonwood bottoms on the opposite side of the river, where a couple of small side channels offer easy whitefish hunting. Beavers splash under the logjam

that divides the deep and fast water from the shallow riffle emptying into the dark pool beneath the bridge. The water is still a bit cloudy from the rain; mayflies and trout will wait, as will I.

I watch the yellow and red holes in the sky pouring light onto the river, warming my hands and cheeks, drying the cottonwoods and the steel beams of the railroad bridge. I watch as the mayflies begin emerging from the river's bed to the surface, skittering and kicking at the sparkling shuck that encases their wings, drifting smoothly with the river. Some are unable to free their wings; trout snatch others. Soon the mayflies sprinkle the river, holding their wings straight in the air to dry for flight.

Some of the mayflies attach to the side of my leg as they pass, crawling up my back and arms. Their slender bodies are mahogany, cylindrical, and uniform, extending beyond their tall, upright wings as much as an inch, with a trio of thin antennae fanning out two inches from their bodies. Lives just begun, yet so close to death.

As they glide by, I notice they look like tiny sailboats cruising the river. I watch the trout start to make small rings at the end of the riffle, where the female mayflies deposit their eggs in the river. They glide low to the surface, diving and dipping their long bodies into the river, laying eggs that will drift with the current and lodge in the crevices of rocks, where

the eggs will soon hatch. Each mayfly repeats this process several times and then dies. They glide, weightless, nimble, with deft precision, falling to the river, evaporating as ephemerally, it seems, as September snow.

The bigger cutthroats move from the shadows of the deep pool beneath the bridge into the shallows, where feeding on egg-laying females and dead "spinners" proves most productive. The river flows clean now, so clear I can see the orange slashes of the cutthroats as they surface and swallow mayflies.

The smaller trout hold at the head of the riffle. The bigger trout hang near the edge, where it empties into the deep pool. This never changes. I typically have better luck with the smaller trout at first,

I watch as the mayflies begin emerging from the river's bed to the surface, skittering and kicking at the sparkling shuck that encases their wings, drifting smoothly ...tiny sailboats cruising the river.

so I cast the mahogany mayfly in the feeding lane of several small cutthroats. No takers. If the trout here refuse a fly on the first cast, then the fly is either too big or too small, so I tie on a smaller fly and cast again. A trout surfaces and

gulps the fly, heading upstream, darting for the cover of a sunken cottonwood tree. It is only about twelve inches long, but the trout are spirited and well fed, so they do not give up easily.

I pull the little cutt away from the sunken log and back into the current where I land it. He is a fine and healthy male. I slip the tiny hook from his upper lip and hold him upright, his spotted nose facing the current, and with a flip of

his tail he returns to the school, a little behind the other small trout. I know I won't fool him again, at least not this day. I cast toward the end of the pool, this time hoping for a big one. My fly scoots across the water like a boat on the sea, as the spotted nose of a big cutt shoots out and swallows it. My reel croons; the heavy trout pulls at the line and plunges for the shadows of the deep pool. I simply hold on, knowing you can't control the big ones. The cutt torpedoed upstream and back downstream, working more line from my reel, and finally holds in the deepest place it finds. I reel in a few turns, weighing him in my mind, and the cutt shoots toward me. I pull in yards of slack line, trying to maintain tension, but it is too late—my line lies limp in the current. Smart bugger, I think, as I look downriver to see the sun sink to the volcanic floor of the Snake River Plain.

As the river fades to black, I struggle to make out the dappled partridge feathers against the steel-blue ripples of the South Fork. I dip my hand in the river, watching it shine my skin the way it burinishes river rock. I scoop water and splash my face with my free hand, keeping my rod tip straight and high with the other hand to maintain the perfect drift of my fly—one last drift. Then I reel in and walk my path out of the river. I hold on to the big cottonwood and curl my hand around the remnants of a limb, like shaking hands with an old friend, then slip through a small hole in the willows.

I scramble up the steep bank, toward the cottonwood, thinking about the previous summer, the first time I brought my son to the river. I had loaded him in a front carrier and walked out

Mahogany bodies and gossamer wings—*Mayflies* rarely live more than a day.

to the middle of a shallow little riffle. He laughed and kicked his feet and pointed at the mayflies floating by; he watched the yellow line sail back and forth over our heads. He squinted into that summer day's white light. I caught a trout and worked it in toward us so he could see it up close. He ran his pudgy little finger across its side and looked up at me, with his cheeks balled above a big grin. I held its nose into the current, and my son splashed at the water covering its spotted back. I let the little trout go.

My son held his hand in the river, wiggling his fingers in the current, pulling them out when it became too cold, plunging them back in again, splashing both our faces. And we watched, for a time, as the river moved by, varnishing our skin. We listened to its tone, a familiar yet vague dialect. I wanted to say to him that the river tells you things and have him understand it, only I wasn't sure what it had said.

I prop an elbow on the old cottonwood and watch in weak light as the river changes moods: the slow, churning eddies, emptying into tall rapids, smoothing to easy riffles, spilling into a deep pool, then sliding under the steel bridge. I try to imagine what my father heard when he listened to the river, what trans-



PHOTO BY KEVIN KISER/MORGUEFILE.COM

lations he would offer for the sounds that centered him. I try to imagine how I will tell my own son about the language of rivers before I, too, am gone.

And I am reminded of the poet Kim Stafford, who writes, "A place is a story happening many times." These moments written in water, arriving in the fluid recursions of memory, I recognize as a rite among the men in my family—our way of continuing the story long after what seems just a brief moment in flight, long after our weightless descent to the river. It is a story told in the convergence of life and death.

Maybe my father meant that rivers tell a story of fathers and sons—his story, our story, now my son's. This is why we return to rivers.

Rick Kmetz grew up in Blackfoot and has lived in Pocatello and Potlatch.

There's a box in my parents' basement that has 'C of I photos' written on its side," said Dorothy. "Do you think the college might be interested in them?"

For one of the few times in my life, I didn't have to ponder a question put to me. "You bet," I said without hesitation. "Do you think I could take a look at them?"

Dorothy Tish and her husband, Brooks, have been great friends of ours for several years, and we get together whenever we have a chance, even though they live in the Seattle area now.

This winter, Dorothy's mother fell and broke her arm, and when complications arose in late January, Dorothy flew back to help her parents for a couple of weeks.

She was visiting Ruby, my wife, who was convalescing from some foot surgery, when that question was asked and so quickly answered.

For anyone who's lived in this part of Idaho very long, the letters "C of I" can mean just one thing: The College of Idaho. That was the name of the small liberal arts college here in Caldwell before it was changed to Albertson College of Idaho, in honor of the founder of the Albertsons supermarket chain. Joe and Kathryn Albertson not only had attended The C of I in the mid-1920s, but over the years, had donated nearly forty million dollars to the school.

In fact, a goodly number of alumni and area residents still refer to the school as The C of I, in respect for all it has done for the community, the region, and the state. I do, too, partly because I taught mathematics there from

1979 through 1996.

Dorothy's maiden name is Braun, and her parents, Walter and Alice Braun, have owned and operated Braun Studios in Caldwell for more than sixty years—and it is still open for

Five hundred pounds of historical negatives discovered in Caldwell basement

business, by appointment, even though Walter is ninety-one.

The Brauns bought the studio and its holdings from Stanton Studios in 1947. In 1938, Stanton had purchased its predecessor, Snodgrass Picture Shop, which had been in business here since 1910.

Somewhere along the line, box

By Les Tanner



upon box of old five-by-seven black-and-white negatives had been moved to the dark, sometimes damp, basement of the Braun home, where they sat undisturbed for more than half a century.

It was one of those boxes that Dorothy's sister, Rosalie, who had flown up from Texas, had run across as she was helping their father prepare a bunch of photographic materials for disposal.

"The box weighs about fifty pounds," said Dorothy, when she called that evening. "Maybe you can come down to the house tomorrow morning and pick it up. I'll call and let you know when would be a good time."

The next morning, Dorothy reported that the box weighed just thirty-eight pounds, and that she should be able to drop it by while her mother was attending her regular therapy session at the hospital, just down the street from our place.

One can't help but ask, 'What if?'
Eight of the twenty-two boxes of negatives are shown here, decades of history sealed, labeled, and ready for meltdown.



She showed up with not one but two boxes, the second containing a dozen old C of I yearbooks. "The college might like these, too," she said.

And thus began several of the most fascinating days I've spent in a long, long time.

As Dorothy and Ruby sat reading the yearbooks (which covered most of the years from 1920 to 1936, a treasure in themselves) and remarking at familiar names such as Albertson and Boone and Hayman and Crookham, I began going through the contents of the box

labeled "C of I photos."

What struck me first was that there was nothing in the carton but hundreds and hundreds of old negatives, mostly five-by-sevens, but a few three-by-fives. No additional packaging, no protective envelopes, not even any string or rubber bands. Nothing but negatives. And thirty-eight pounds of film, even of the old silver-emulsion type, is a lot of film.

The next thing I noticed was that they were just lying there willy-nilly. No order or organization, no smaller containers, no



of film. Just piles of negatives, as though they'd just been tossed in the box (which, we were to learn very soon, was exactly how they got there).

And when I began to go through the negatives individually—with care, I must add, wearing cotton gloves and handling the film by the edges wherever possible—it dawned on me that I was in temporary possession of some pretty neat stuff, even though, as it turned out, only a fraction of them were photographs of College of Idaho people.

Each negative had something written on it—a last name, along with either a number, such as 3598, or a notation, such as “CHS, 1922.” Amazingly, among the first few I picked up was one of a young man fitted out in football togs, and in a classic three-point stance, labeled “Joe Albertson, C of I, 1926,” and a second labeled “George L. Crookham.” Later, I found pictures of a “McCurry, C of I, 1926,” who would not too long afterward be known as Kathryn McCurry Albertson.

“Wow,” I thought to myself. “This has got to be one of the finds of the year.”

Before I did any more sorting, I e-mailed Jan Boles, archivist at the college. I told him about the negatives and that Dorothy had said her parents most

likely would be willing to donate not only this box full, but also the twelve year-books to the college archives.

His response was at least as quick as mine had been. “That would be super!” he said. “When can I see them?”

“I’d like to keep looking through them myself first, if that’s OK. Besides, Dorothy says there are more boxes of negatives they might be willing to part with.”

“More?” asked Jan.

“That’s what she said. I’ll know better in a couple of days.”

Two days later, I contacted Jan again.

“How about nine more boxes of negatives?” I asked, as casually as I was able to at the moment.

Here’s a bit of what has transpired since Dorothy’s first visit and that not-so-idle question more than two months ago:

No fewer than twenty-two boxes of negatives dating from 1919 (the earliest date verified so far) to the early 1940s, and several important notebooks and other materials, now reside in the archives’ storeroom at the college.

Jan’s best estimate is that there are some five hundred pounds of negatives, numbering around sixteen thousand.

Nearly all of the boxes had been

taped and labeled with such words as “ready to send for melting.” Turns out Mr. Braun had made tentative arrangements to have the negatives shipped to a recycling company in Salt Lake City, to be melted down for the silver content of the chemicals in them—and he was to have been paid the grand sum of forty dollars for the first load of 260 pounds of negatives. They were to have been picked up just about the time Dorothy found them.

Now that’s a close call.

Amazingly, of the thousands of negatives checked so far, fewer than a half dozen had deteriorated to the point they had to be discarded. On many of the others, various stages of “silvering” exist, a condition that occurs when silver from the emulsion begins to leach onto the surface of the film. Even the worst of these, however, when held to the light, can be seen to contain an image that can be retrieved and printed.

Incidentally, ordinary darkroom procedures need not be used to make prints from the negatives, and may even be harmful to the delicate film. Instead, the negatives can be scanned into a computer, the colors reversed, and the resulting images stored in memory, shared elec-

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Soon to be known as Kathryn Albertson,** Kathryn McCurry was a lovely college co-ed in 1926;

Joe Albertson strikes a three-point stance in his College of Idaho football togs in 1927;

Miklancic wedding party in 1924.



tronically, saved on CDs, and printed on photo-quality paper.

The good state of the negatives' preservation is doubly surprising because a majority of them were made on nitrate film, which can, under the wrong conditions, become unstable, even explosive. Two major enemies of nitrate film are heat and light. As luck would have it, neither of those conditions was present in the basement of the Braun home.

Jan is in the process, first and foremost, of making sure the materials are preserved from further deterioration. The negatives must be placed in individual sleeves (paper, to allow them to breathe, especially important for the nitrate film). A Caldwell businessman with a deep interest in local history has agreed to underwrite the cost of the necessary archival materials.

The next step is to sort and catalog the negatives, with the goal of entering the information into a database accessible to the public. This will be no quick or easy task, but when it is completed, people doing historical or genealogical research should find that information to be of immense value.

As he has been going through the negatives, Jan has run across names famil-

iar to him and significant to the college or the area. This has given him numerous opportunities to call some unsuspecting soul somewhere around the country and say, "You'll never guess whom I have a photograph of."

The collection contains negatives made by the Snodgrass Picture Shop and the Stanton Studios. The earliest negatives uncovered so far were made by Snodgrass for the yearbooks of The C of I and local high schools. Those negatives have the last names of the subjects, plus school and year, written on them, but no other numbers.

Most of the remaining negatives are labeled with last names and numbers but contain no dates, and so far no index has turned up associating dates with numbers. Snodgrass made negatives numbered 9400 through 16287, and we know some of the photos numbered in the 9400s were taken in 1924. The whereabouts of Snodgrass negatives numbered below 9400, if they still exist, is not known. The last numbered negative (16287) was taken July 28, 1938. They also took at least one photograph July 30, 1938, the next-to-last day they owned the studio.

Stanton Studios used a different cat-

aloging system. They numbered their negatives for a while, beginning with 1000, then kept records in notebooks not yet recovered.

All of the above is general information, of course. I found the specific stuff to be a lot more interesting.

Because we have no index associating dates with most of the negatives, it has taken some shrewd detective work to connect dates to a few of them. (I use the term "shrewd" with all modesty, I assure you.)

In looking through some of the negatives, I discovered three sets of photographs of couples, clearly taken on their wedding days.

While searching the web, I came across the BYU-Idaho Western States Historical Marriage Records Index, which has records of marriages that took place in western states before 1932. Using those records, I was able to match names from those negatives with three weddings that took place in Canyon County.

From that, we are as sure as we can be that:

- ♦ Two photos numbered 9414 were taken in Roswell on July 24, 1924, at the wedding of Lena Leona Fretwell



and Cecil Paul Leigh;

• Three photos numbered 9475 and 9476 were taken in Nampa on September 15, 1924, at the wedding of Frances Marchek and Valentine Miklancic; and

• Two photos numbered 11135 were taken in Parma on September 18, 1927, at the wedding of Hazel Dortha Bertsch and Loren Cecil Gildea.

Cool, huh?

It would be even cooler if relatives of the Leighs, the Miklancics, and the Gildeas were to read this article and see that information.

One set of negatives is merely labeled “Copy Negatives,” and they appear to be photographs of photographs. Several of them show men in WWI military dress. That, along with the clothing worn by the subjects in other photos, indicates that many or most are photos of photographs taken before 1920.

One of these shows a cross in an (apparent) military cemetery. Written on the crossbar is “Edmund Conway, CPL. CO. D 2 ENGRS, U.S.A.”

Again, I turned to the computer. This time I searched for the words “Edmund Conway Idaho.” Eventually I came across a site listing “World War One Civilian Draft Regulations, Canyon County, Idaho,” and on that list I found “Conway, Edmund, b 16 Apr 1896, Notus, Idaho.”

I got out a Notus phone book, but found no Conways listed, so I thought no more about it at the time. Later, however, as I was looking through a special bunch of negatives called “stamps” (to conserve expensive film, photographers often rigged their cameras so they could get nine or sixteen small photos—stamps—

on a single negative), I found one labeled “Edmund Conway.”

At first I thought I had discovered a photo of the young man who had apparently died in World War I. Further research proved that not to be the case, however. The Snodgrasses kept careful records of their stamps, as I’m sure they did all of their work, and records of some of those stamps, including the one of Edmund Conway, were among the miscellaneous items the Brauns had donated.

These records showed that this particular Edmund Conway was photographed on December 24, 1934, so he could not have been the one buried beneath that cross.

My next thought was that perhaps the earlier Conway had married before he went off to war, and that he’d had a son who was given his father’s name.

To double check, I went to those marriage records I’d found earlier, but failed to find a marriage involving Edmund Conway. Luckily, however, the site listed all Conways who were married in Idaho before 1932—and one was a Eugene L. Conway who married Nettie Marie Pennington in Caldwell on February 6, 1917.

Well, this prompted me to look at those draft records again, and this time I noticed that below the “Conway, Edmund,” there was a “Conway, Eugene L., b. 14 Apr 1893, Notus, Idaho.” The only reasonable conclusions: Eugene was an older brother to Edmund, and the photo wasn’t of the original Edmund, but of his nephew.

The Snodgrass Picture Shop produced this photo, the copy negative simply labeled ‘Conway.’ The date is unknown.

I looked in the Notus phone book again, to check to make sure I hadn’t missed a “Conway” listing, but found none. There was, however, a John Pennington listed. (I’ve since been told there is a Conway Road near Notus.)

I haven’t gone any further than that. But maybe John Pennington will read this, as I hope the Leighs and the Miklancics and the Gildeas will.

As an after-note, as I was trying to recover that information on the Conway brothers, I came across a site which listed names on the headstones in Canyon Hill Cemetery in Caldwell. The words “Eugene L. Conway, 1893-1921” jumped right out at me.

What is there to add to that? Nothing I can think of at the moment.

I could go on—and on, and on, and on—but I won’t right now. Maybe some other time. For the time being, you and I can ponder what stories there are to be discovered in that wonderful, priceless treasure that came so close to being nothing more than a few dollars’ worth of silver and a lot of toxic fumes.

Les Tanner lives in Caldwell.

Photographs courtesy of The Albertson College of Idaho’s Smylie Archives Snodgrass-Stanton Collection, a gift of Walter and Alice Braun.



The Gem State Archives

Gateway to Idaho's best-kept secrets

By Margo Aragon



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARGO ARAGON

Idaho is full of “best-kept secrets,” and I just found another one. The Idaho State Historical Society Public Archives and Research Library contains enough historical data on Idaho and the Pacific Northwest to keep anyone interested for the rest of one’s life. Directing this extraordinary 61,000-square-foot repository of manuscripts, photographs, films, books, maps, government and prison records, videos, and oral history interviews is Steve Walker, Idaho’s state archivist. I met Steve recently while he was touring north central Idaho and giving workshops on the care and conservation of materials.

What exactly, I wanted to know, does an archivist do? Steve laughed. Delighted, it seemed, to answer a question he has grown used to answering since moving to Idaho from New York in 1997. He is only the second archivist for the state since 1989.

Idaho was the last state to have a state archivist. Until then, the thousands and thousands of historic materials were housed in spaces all over Boise, wherever a bit of room could be found to store the amazing collection of documents until they found a permanent

LEFT: A wealth of history— Each box, in the temperature- and humidity-controlled room, represents one cubic foot. Idaho State Archivist Steve Walker says there are over fifty thousand cubic feet of archival materials.

preserving the past

home in a building specifically suited to preserving them.

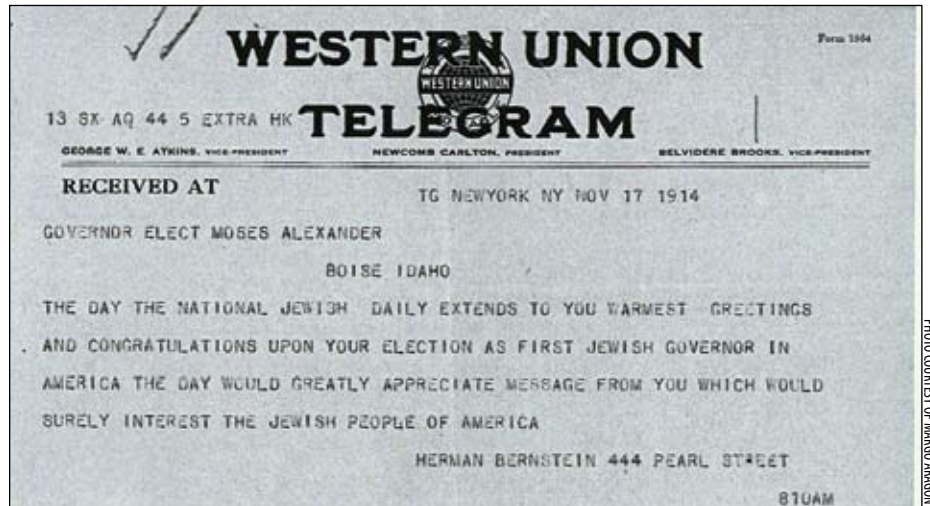
The Society of American Archivists describes an archivist as someone who “establishes and maintains control, both physical and intellectual, over records of enduring value.” What this really means is that Steve Walker has a wonderful and daunting job of collecting records from communities and people and offering them to the public for historic research and genealogical purposes.

Steve said deciding what to keep and what to discard is one of the hardest things to do. “We’ve established a collection policy as to what we’re collecting. The Idaho Historical Society sets the policy for collecting materials of Idaho and of significance.” Steve added that “historic doesn’t mean old; it just means something that has long-lasting value.”

Idaho’s constitution is housed at the Public Archives and Research Library. But this building has “the draft of the draft to the constitution.” The committee notes, details that reveal how the Idaho constitution was constructed, are available for public viewing and research.

“What we’ve got is a lot of material like that, that shows legislative intent,” Steve said.

One of the most disturbing bits of Idaho history has been preserved since the late 18th Century. During the 1877 War, when the non-treaty Nez Perce people wanted to leave their homeland for Canada and were pursued by government soldiers, a man wrote to the



territorial authority asking if it was OK now to kill a Nez Perce man.

“You really got to see the real racial bias that was going on at that time. Which is sort of a sad thing to look at, but I think it’s very important to understand what really was going on in that age. They thought, Gee, now

that there’s this war, I can go out and shoot him, huh? It just makes you shudder when you read some of this stuff. But it’s part of our history,” said Steve.

If you’re interested in historic crime and Idaho criminals, the archives has an unbelievable amount of information available. After the Department of Corrections keeps their records for a mandated amount of time, perhaps twenty to twenty-five years, the archives receives them.

There are mug shots of every person who was at the Idaho State Penitentiary from approximately num-

If you’re interested in historic crime and Idaho criminals, the archives has an unbelievable amount of information available.

ABOVE: Although he was born in Bavaria, Moses Alexander became the first Jewish governor in Idaho and the United States. He was also one of the very few high-elected Jewish officials in the world at that time.

OPPOSITE TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Blaine Bake of Boise pauses a moment during his research in the Archives Reading Room. Only pencils are used for writing, and gloves are issued when handling archived material; Visitors can access microfiche and microfilm records of Idaho newspapers, census roles, and government documents. Some of the earliest records include an 1864 edition of the Idaho Statesman; Hundreds of thousands of reference materials are available to researchers.

OPPOSITE BELOW: Idaho’s Alturas County was once the largest county in the United States. This map shows a detailed drawing of a proposed courthouse that may never have been built. Alturas County eventually went out of existence in 1895 and became several counties, including present-day Blaine and Jerome counties.

ber five hundred on up, even glass plate negatives from territorial times. Steve said literally hundreds of thousands of photographs are stored and catalogued at the archives—including crime scene photos that show, in addition to the crime or accident, “establishing shots,” views in a 360-degree perspective. It may sound like a small detail, but for researchers trying to get an accurate sense of what an era looked like, it’s a gold mine. The types of photos on a wall, the kind of interior or fixtures or kitchen appliances, fabric patterns, layouts of rooms, house designs, car models—each photo

reveals a mini time capsule of an era.

While Steve would like to open each new box or envelope that arrives at the public archives, that job falls to several dedicated volunteers. He said he depends heavily on the volunteers to assist in the never-ending cycle of receiving and labeling the enormous backlog of material and the new items that find their way to the archives.

Bonnie Fuller is perhaps a typical archive volunteer who, after retiring from working for the State of Idaho, became interested in genealogy. Like other history buffs, she stumbled on the public archives quite by accident. Soon she was

spending enough time poring over documents that she got to know several of the staff. Volunteering was a natural extension of her interest.

Bonnie spends most of her volunteer hours typing information into a database after the boxes have been opened and the documents or collection put into acid-free folders and labeled. She recently finished indexing eighty boxes of Nez Perce County court records. One letter caught her eye.

“The letter was written in 1836 by the Secretary of War authorizing Spalding and the Whitmans to come out and establish missions out here. It



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[www.idahohistory.net/
library_collections.html](http://www.idahohistory.net/library_collections.html)

RIGHT: Idaho History Center— *The south end of the center, newly built in 2005 and dedicated in January 2006. It took four weeks to move in all of Idaho's archives with the help of twenty-five to thirty Department of Corrections inmates, Idaho History Center staff, and volunteers.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARGO ARAGON

was really cool to see that," said Bonnie. Henry Harmon Spalding, his wife, Eliza Spalding, and Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman would eventually live among the Nez Perce and Cayuse tribes to teach and preach Christianity.

Steve pointed out that finding letters such as Spalding's makes it seem like Christmas every day. You never know when a key piece of history will suddenly show up in a box or file folder. He wants people to know anyone can have a look at Idaho's history at the Public Archives and Research Library. In fact, Steve encourages people to stop by and acquaint themselves with the breadth and depth of Idaho collected in paper, on film, and on tape in oral history interviews. He or his staff will provide tours and answer questions about care and conservation of historical materials. Their website offers

an astounding list of tips to help anyone preserve just about anything.

"This belongs to them," Steve said about Idahoans. "This is a resource they're entitled to just by living here. They don't have to be born here. They don't even have to vote here. It's just great information. You name the topic, and there's probably some information on it. It's unique. There's nothing like it anywhere else in the world."

As much as Steve and Bonnie love what they do, there's never enough staff, time, or money to halt the decay that seeps in to collections if there aren't enough resources to preserve them. But that doesn't deter

Steve as he writes for grants to tour the state offering workshops, talking to people about the best way to preserve a document, a reel of audio tape, or a glass plate negative revealing ancestral images in period clothing. Steve makes it clear he'll travel anywhere in the state, wherever there's a need for conservation and preservation information.

And volunteers like Bonnie, who have become integral to the preservation of Idaho history, can't imagine being anywhere else.

"If you're interested in history," she said, "it's a great place to be."

Margo Aragon lives in Lewiston.

Steve encourages people to stop by and acquaint themselves with the breadth and depth of Idaho collected in paper, on film, and on tape in oral history interviews.

Saving the Yellowstone cutthroat trout

Fishermen, engineers, government agencies, and a senator's staff collaborate to save wild fish

By Mike Homza

World-renowned Henrys Lake trout couldn't reach their spawning habitat because of badly deteriorated culverts. Could a small nonprofit find an alternative to the culverts—and funding—before the subspecies vanished?

Hand-carried by Boy Scouts, the Henrys Lake trout depended on human help in recent years to reach their spawning grounds. The Yellowstone cutthroats, called “cutts” or YCT, couldn't make it through old corrugated pipe cul-

verts on Targhee and Howard Creeks to get to the upper sixteen miles of their habitat. And each season their plight grew worse. Without drastic—and speedy—intervention, the native fish species could disappear.

“One day we watched several hundred cutts coming up Targhee Creek looking for spawning beds, and it was just heartbreaking,” said Bob Bartsch, vice president of Henrys Lake Foundation. “Only a few of these magnificent fish could jump through the culverts, as the creek had deteriorated and eroded so badly. At least half of the fish were dying before our eyes.”

This was really bad news because the stream produces the vast majority of wild-spawned fish in Henrys Lake. Sportsmen from around the world travel to the Henrys Lake area to fish for cutts. The fish represent an important resource for the local economy. Yet populations had decreased so drastically that YCT had been considered for listing as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Brian Klatt of Boy Scout Troop 602 from West Yellowstone releases a ‘cutt’ upstream on Targhee Creek.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB BARTSCH, HENRYS LAKE FOUNDATION

An 'impossible' dream

With Bob by the stream that day was Damon Keen, Idaho Fish & Game hatchery specialist. "I'd often watched the cutthroat trying to get through the culverts," said Damon. "It was just too steep and slick for them to make it. They'd worked so hard to get here and then couldn't complete their journey. It was really sad."

The men dreamed out loud about replacing the culverts with bridges, re-creating a free-flowing stream. "No way can this project be done by your little fishermen's nonprofit," said Damon. "It's way too expensive and would take ten years. The fish will be gone by then."

Bob vowed to remedy the cutts' dilemma. This was the species Lewis and Clark preserved to show Thomas Jefferson. Now the YCT's habitat was a mere ten percent of its original range. Bob was determined not to let the species perish.

He approached Senator Mike Crapo's office. The senator's agricultural attaché, Don Dixon, gathered a multi-agency task force, which included the Henrys Lake Foundation, Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG), U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Henry's Fork Foundation, and GeoEngineers, Inc.

"Replacing the old culverts with bridges and restoring streams to their natural condition was the best way to ensure safe fish passage," Bob explained. "But for that, we'd need an engineering study, and state agencies couldn't provide one fast enough."

Fortunately, GeoEngineers of Boise offered to do a study right away. Its research kick-started the project."

In the nick of time

The recommended bridges and stream improvements would cost \$1.8 million, far beyond the nonprofit's scope. Bob turned to his buddies on the task force again, including Chuck Winder, chairman of the ITD board of directors.

"We realized the extreme urgency of getting new bridges in place and opening the waterway and tributary areas for access to spawning habitat," said Chuck. "Any delay could mean losing significant portions of the fish population in Henrys Lake. We also appreciated that such diverse groups had come together for help." The ITD board of directors unanimously passed a special resolution and approved funding of the entire amount.

Adding to the project's momentum, the U.S. Forest Service rushed to perform wetland and cultural studies so permits could be granted early. ITD workers tested soils, drilling during a brutal snow-

storm (Targhee and Howard Creeks run near the Continental Divide at an elevation of 6,600 feet). ITD hurried to design bridge structures, and GeoEngineers designed the stream enhancements, while the Greater Yellowstone Coalition spearheaded the grueling permitting process.

Time had almost run out for permitting when Don, Senator Crapo's attaché, stepped in and tied up loose ends, allowing the team to get the environmental permits the day of the deadline. He saved the day again when project costs came in too high, and he collaborated with ITD to break a budget logjam. Without his help, missed deadlines would have cost the project an entire year.

Creativity and flexibility

Designing the restoration project took some ingenuity, as no prototypes or design standards existed in the state. The project was the first of this magnitude undertaken by the ITD solely to correct a fish passage. The only guideline was a request from



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOENGINEERS

safe passage



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOENGINEERS

OPPOSITE: **The original Howard Creek culvert** was impassable to Yellowstone cutthroat trout, rendering vital spawning habitat inaccessible. The new bridge now stands on this site.

ABOVE AND INSET: **Deteriorating culverts** under State Highway 87 created a fish passage barrier that blocked access to vital spawning habitat and threatened the survival of the native cutts in Henrys Lake. Culverts have been replaced with a new bridge.

Fish & Game and the Forest Service to reestablish natural characteristics of the streams.

Fortunately, GeoEngineers had an established stream restoration design philosophy, proven successful in similar projects throughout the Northwest, which focused on designing self-sustaining stream systems. Using this approach at Targhee and Howard creeks minimized human intervention and used on-site features such as trees and rocks. Also, its design-build approach was flexible enough to let engineers fine-tune elements of the plan during construction.

“We’ve created in-house computer programs that let us examine ‘what-if’ design scenarios,” said Wayne Wright, principal biologist of GeoEngineers. “This literally streamlines our process, so better designs can be determined much faster. If we hadn’t already had the programs, we never could have met the project’s aggressive timeline.”



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Tricky timing

Design work started in December 2004, and the construction bid went out in spring 2005. Work could not start, however, until after Labor Day because of traffic and fish requirements. Being at such a high elevation, the late start date left a very small window for construction.

“With any bridge, you’ve got issues like detouring traffic, driving piles, pouring concrete, and paving,” said Curtis Cannon, owner of Cannon Builders. “But here we also had to restore, construct, re-grade and re-vegetate two active streams—without causing environmental damage in the process—and in the same time frame as the road work. Talk about a scheduling nightmare!”

Channels and floodplains had to be excavated. Boulder drops, pools, riffles, log jams, and other fish-friendly features had to be put in. Yet stream work could not occur when dangerous bridge construction was going on overhead. The answer was to leapfrog construction activities between the bridge sites, which were about a half-mile apart.

Implementing this flexible and collaborative design-build approach, both bridges and the stream improvements were complete and open to vehicular and fish traffic by the end of November.

It’s nearly impossible to tell that the finished project was man-made. “Natural and native streambed materials, a nice stream meander,

Yellowstone cutthroat trout are netted and transferred to a temporary diversion as the restoration area on Howard Creek drains prior to construction.

and a reconstructed slope just like the stream above—looks like a stream that built itself to me!” said Gary Vecellio, environmental staff biologist with the IDFG, when he visited the site.

Unprecedented teamwork

The Targhee and Howard Creek projects were accomplished in little over a year, about a tenth the time such an endeavor would normally take. How was this possible?

“Unprecedented teamwork,” said Chuck. “The Henrys Lake Foundation took the lead by getting the assessment done and coordinating everything. Senator Crapo’s office provided the political encouragement. The Forest Service, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, and the Henry’s Fork Foundation gave financial support and were instrumental in securing permits in record time. Fish & Game was behind us the entire time. ITD provided major funding and did the civil and structural designs, right-of-way easements, and project management. GeoEngineers’

passion and expertise provided vision for necessary stream enhancement elements. And of course, the Boy Scouts were out there saving fish even before we got started.

“I can think of no better example of how diverse groups can work together under a very tight time frame to maintain Idaho’s treasured natural resources,” he continued. “I’d like to say a big ‘thanks’ to them all.”

Damon added his appreciation. “Never again will the old culverts cut short the trout’s annual spawning ritual. In a sense, this is only the beginning of a real revival for the cutthroats here.”

This fishing season, be sure to check out the Yellowstone cutthroat trout in Henrys Lake. If the fishing is good, no doubt it’s because the cutts’ parents traveled under the Targhee and Howard Creek bridges under State Highway 87 and made it to historic spawning grounds upstream—with a little help from their human friends.

Mike Homza is a senior water resource engineer with GeoEngineers in Boise.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOENGINEERS

Three-bean salsa

By Diana Caldwell

Yield: 2-1/2 quarts

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (15-oz.) can black beans
- 1 (15-oz.) can small red beans
- 1 (15-oz.) can small white beans
- 24 ozs. medium to hot salsa
- 1 (28-oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 2 cups sliced ripe olives
- 3/4 cup (3 ozs.) chopped sweet onion
- 3/4 cup (1 oz.) chopped green onion
- 3/4 cup (1 oz.) chopped cilantro
- 1/2 cup (2 ozs.) chopped green pepper
- 1 jalapeño, minced (if desired)
- 2 Tbsp. fresh minced garlic
- 1 Tbsp. lime juice
- 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- 1/2 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. sea salt

PREPARATION

> Rinse and drain beans. Transfer to non-reactive bowl. Blend beans with all remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate at least two hours before serving. Serve as a dip with tortilla chips or as a sauce over burritos, flautas, or tacos.

Diana Caldwell lives in Boise. She is administrator of the Idaho Bean Commission.



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- FARMERS MARKETS OPEN THROUGHOUT STATE
- 1-27 2nd Annual Willowtree Miniature Show, Idaho Falls
 1-30 Deep Ecology, by ERC & Northwest Earth Institute, Ketchum
 1-31 Amil Quayle, Art of the Absurd, Cordillera Gallery, Pocatello
 1-6/2 The Art of Tibet: Through Local Eyes, Hailey
 1-6/22 Savage Seas, Museum of Idaho, Idaho Falls
 5 Anthropological & Environmental Lecture, Burley
 5 Snake River Flats Harmony Society, Twin Falls
 5-7 Salmon River Art Show & Sale, Riggins
 6 Silverwood Theme Park opens, Coeur d'Alene
 6-7 Annual Riggins Rodeo, cowboy breakfast, dances & parade, Riggins
 6-7 Gun Show, Post Falls
 6-7 Northwest Sacred Music Chorale, Coeur d'Alene
 6-7 Mud Bog Festival, Bonners Ferry
 6-7 Idaho Woodcarvers Guild 25th Exhibition, Boise
 7-8 Migratory Flag Exchange & Bird Day, Bonners Ferry
 9 Brown Bag Lecture: The Members of the Corps of Discovery, BAM, Boise
 tba Silver Strike Dinner, Wallace
 11 Downey Kite Festival, Downey
 11 District Softball, Orofino
 11 Lewis Knowles, book talk, Sign-Talker, Lewis & Clark Series, Weippe
 12 Fountain of Wishes, first Walk of Wishes, Coeur d'Alene
 12 Spotlight, Bonneville H.S. Little Theater, Idaho Falls
 12 Lazer Vaudeville, Colonial Theater, Idaho Falls
 12 Art Walk, Coeur d'Alene
 12 American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, Coeur d'Alene
 12-13 Clue, musical, Lake City Playhouse, Coeur d'Alene
 13 MS Walk, Twin Falls
 13 Frizbee Golf Tournament, Twin Falls
 13 Depot Day & Classic Car Show, Wallace
 13 CAL Western Dinner & Auction Party, Sandpoint
 13 Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival, Cub River Guest Ranch, Preston
 13 Run For the Hill of It, Old Spiral Highway, Lewiston
 13-14 Dutch Tulip Festival & Flea Market, Rigby
 13 Music Club Home Tour, Idaho Falls
 13 Awakenings, Idaho Falls Symphony, Idaho Falls
 13-14 Pend d'Oreille Winery Huckleberry Blush Release, Sandpoint
 15-20 Kellogg Elks Roundup, Kellogg
 17 Public School Performances presented by Boise Philharmonic, Boise
 17 Back to Summer BBQ, Enaville
 16-18 Bonneville High School & Rocky Mountain Middle School Choir, Orchestra & Band Concerts, Idaho Falls
 18 4th Annual Multicultural Festival, Blackfoot
 18-21 Lost in the 50s, Vintage Car Parade & Show, dance, concerts, Sandpoint
 19 Chamber Golf Tournament, Meridian
 19-21 Nez Perce Indian Root Festival & Pow Wow, Kamiah
 tba Concert Fundraiser Teton Valley Senior Center, Driggs
 tba St. Maries Downtown Cleanup, St. Maries
 tba Bike-a-thon Benefit, St. Maries
 20-21 Horse Show, Post Falls
 20 Good Sams Fun Run/Walk, Idaho Falls
 20 Ghosts of Lewiston, historic walking tour, Lewiston
 20 Blow the Whistle on Asthma in Idaho, Idaho Falls
 20 Snake River Fiber Fair 2006, Idaho Falls
 20-29 A Circle of Cultures, A Lewis & Clark Experience, Julia Davis Park, Boise
 21 Lava Hot Springs Opening Day, Lava Hot Springs
 21 Canine Caper, Bonners Ferry
 21 The Kingston Trio, benefit, Harms Memorial Hospital Foundation, American Falls
 21-22 Bike Race, Bear Lake
 23 Dent Campground & Dent Group Camp open for season, Orfino
 24 Rockin' Through the Ages benefit, Idaho Falls
 25 Spaghetti Feed, Silverton
 25 Mark Moorman Golf Tournament, Twin Falls
 26 NAIA Banquet, Lewiston
 26-28 35th Annual Sun Run Bike & Car Show, Pocatello
 26-6/2 NAIA Baseball World Series, Lewiston
 27-28 Hailey Springfest Arts & Craft Fair, Hailey

- 27-29 Street Rods of Idaho Car Show, Pocatello
 27-29 Sun Valley Mountain Wellness Festival, Sun Valley
 27-9/2 Summer Sounds, Saturdays at Park Place, Sandpoint
 28 American Heroes Day, Silverwood Theme Park, Coeur d'Alene
 28 U.S. Half Marathon Run, Sun Valley
 29 Iris Festival, Pocatello
 29 The Rockin' Jake Band, Pocatello
 29 Annual Fisherman's Breakfast/Trout Season Opens, Avery
 29-30 Dog Show, Post Falls
 30 Memorial Day Celebration, Chesterfield
 30 Memorial Day Veterans Parade & Ceremony, Bonners Ferry
 31-6/4 Young at Art, Education Foundation, Sun Valley

june

- 1-8/31 Music in the Park, local musicians, Driggs, Teton, Victor & Teton Valley parks
 1-8/31 Ketch'um Alive, free concerts, Tuesday evenings, Sun Valley
 tba Amateur Golf Tournament, Meridian
 tba Meridian Paint the Town, Meridian
 tba North Idaho Timberfest, logging contests, Sandpoint
 1 WBCA Summer Kick-Off BBQ, Wallace
 1 Brown Bag Series: Neurological Problems in Children, Sun Valley
 1-4 Native Perspectives on the Trail: A Contemporary American Indian Art Portfolio, Boise Art Museum, Boise
 2 Preston Arena Cross, motocross, Preston
 2-3 Skandi Dag, Scandinavian Parade & Festival, Twin Falls
 2 Leon Russell, singer, guitarist & pianist, Idaho Falls
 2-4 Post Falls Days, Post Falls
 2-24 Angel Street, mystery/thriller, Idaho Falls
 3 Big Water Blow Out & River Festival, Dutch Oven Cook-Off & Entertainment, Riggins
 3 4th Native & Drought Tolerant Plant Sale, Ketchum
 3 Senior Yard Sale, Pocatello
 3-4 Mini-Cassia Auto Collector Car Show, Twin Falls
 3-4 North Idaho Rock Mineral, Gem & Jewelry Show, Coeur d'Alene
 3-5 Mountain Man Rendezvous, McCammon
 4 Borders Three Jamboree Rod Benders Car Show, Bonners Ferry
 4 Dive into Summer, Golf Tournament, Lava Hot Springs
 tba Horseback Poker Ride, St. Maries
 5-9 Drama Camp, Oakley
 5-11 North Idaho Senior's Games, Lewiston
 6 National Hunger Awareness Day & summer feeding starts, Lewiston
 6-10 Family Yoga Camp at Sleepy Y Cabins, Swan Valley
 7 Alive After Five, Wednesday evenings, Boise
 8 Play-Freedom Rally, Orofino
 9 A Chefs Affaire, Lewiston
 9 Dworshak/Orofino Hatchery Kids Free Fishing Day, Orofino
 9 Opera in the Plaza, Coeur d'Alene
 9 Relay For Life, Rupert
 9 Eagle Fun Days, Parade, Golf Tournament &, Carnival, Eagle
 10 Sheep Show & Sale, Post Falls
 10 Boulder Beach Water Park Opens, Coeur d'Alene
 10-11 Pend d'Oreille Winery Birthday Party, Sandpoint
 10-11 Post Falls Duathlon, Post Falls
 10-11 Fiddle Fest, Post Falls

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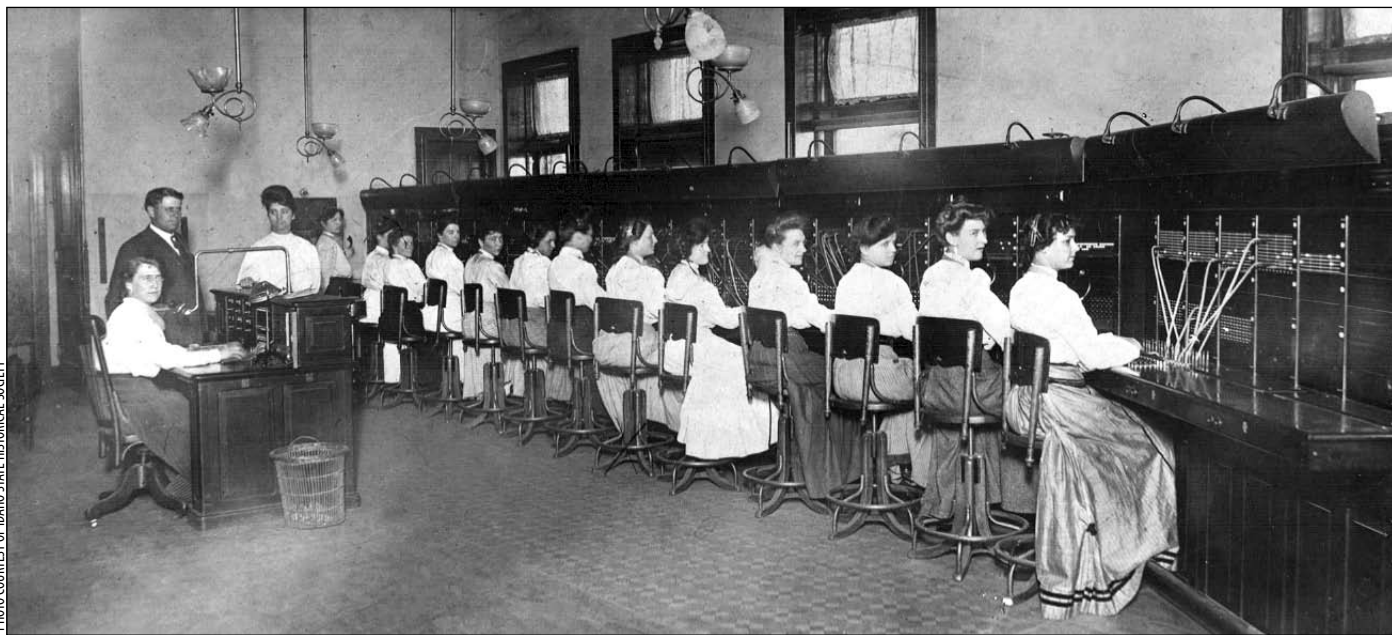
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Hello girls

By Arthur Hart

They called them “hello girls,” those young women who operated the first telephone switchboards in Idaho. The fifteen women shown in this month’s historical snapshot, with a lone male looking on, were the crew that kept the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company’s Payette exchange running smoothly.

The Bell Company installed the Payette system in the fall of 1901 after it bought the telephone franchise owned by prominent local businessmen and town founders A. B. Moss, Peter Pence, James Lauer, D. C. Chase, C. E. Brainerd, and B. P. Shawhan. They had secured the franchise from the Payette City Council, but had been unable to get an exchange going. Mountain Bell agent Hugh L. Thomas persuaded them to turn the stalled operation over to his company, after negotiations described as “delicate.”

The switchboards operated by the women in our photograph served fifty subscribers in Payette and another twenty-five on nearby farms. There were plans to develop long-distance lines to Ontario and Vale, Oregon, and eventually all the way to Burns. It was a time when Alexander Graham Bell’s invention was making possible direct voice communication across the land. The enterprising Canadian had patented his invention in 1876, formed the Bell Telephone Company in 1877, and installed the first switchboard in 1878.

Idaho, though in a remote mountain area with very few people, was never far behind in acquiring the latest technology. In 1878, Lewiston had the honor of having the first telephones in Idaho Territory when merchant John P. Vollmer installed a local system with three instruments connecting his home


and places of business. Vollmer went on to become one of Idaho’s wealthiest men. Stagecoach king John Hailey was not far behind. On June 4, 1879, he had a telephone line connecting his Boise stage office in town with his ranch house a mile away. By the end of 1883 Rocky Mountain Bell had a network of phone lines linking most of the businesses and households in Boise.

Switchboards in the Bell system were operated entirely by young women, allowing more and more of them to get out of their parents’ homes and into the commercial world. It was liberating in most respects, but not financially rewarding. The women in this month’s historical snapshot were paid three dollars for a ten-hour day.


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

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