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*January 2018*

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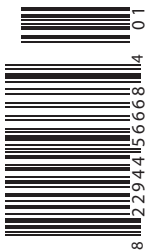
# IDAHO magazine

JANUARY 2018 | VOL. 17, NO. 4



## The Egg-Take

Lake Pend Oreille Kokanee



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Spotlight City

Of Silence and Sanity  
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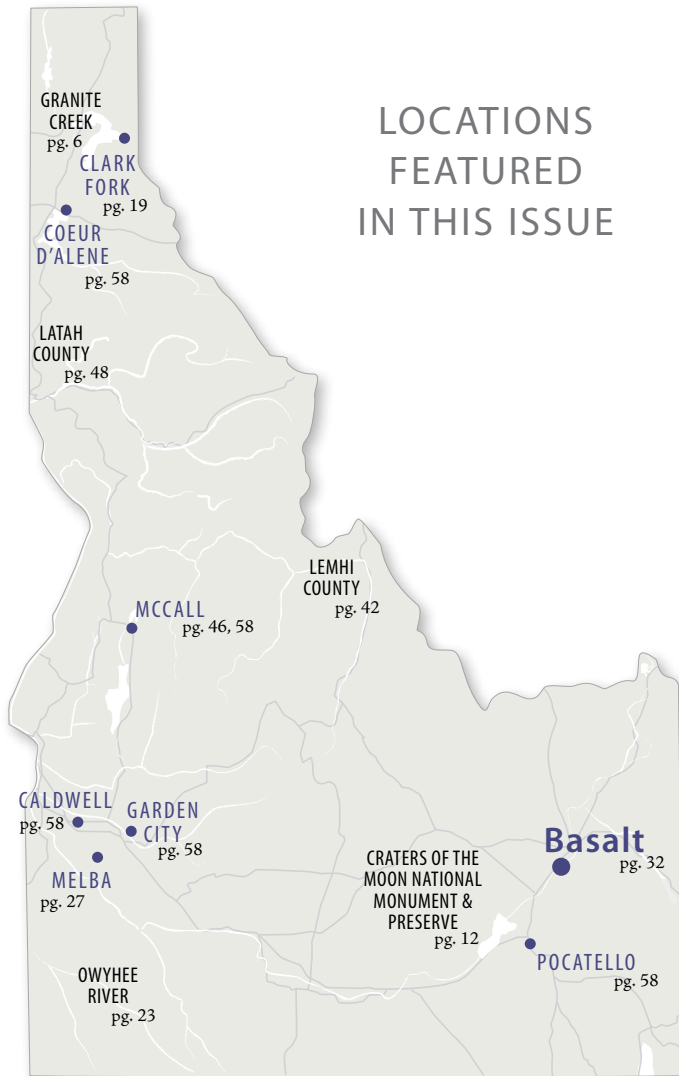
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## COVER PHOTO



Eggs are taken from a spawning female kokanee at Granite Creek near Lake Pend Oreille.

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## TWIN BRIDGES ACROSS CHESAPEAKE BAY

Lyrical illustration by:

*Dick Lee*

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# IDAHO magazine

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This photo is from the downtown area of Caldwell at Indian Creek. Love the tunnel with all the lights around. So much fun!

~Photo by Michelle Chadd

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ABOVE: Jaime Mitchell (left) and Becky Haag gather fish on Granite Creek to prepare for the egg-take.

# The Egg-Take

At Zero Dark Thirty

BY MARY TERRA-BERNS

It's zero dark thirty when Becky Haag and I arrive at the dock in Hope, where the Bonner County Sheriff's boat is waiting for us. We gather up our gear, grab our coffee, and head down the ramp, where the boat is tethered to the dock.

As we cross the dock, we scan the rough water of Lake Pend Oreille and shoot a not-as-bad-as-it-could-be look at each other. The lake can be dicey in the winter, but Marine Deputy Ron Raiha is one of the most experienced guys out here, so we know we're in good hands. Nonetheless, I'm glad to see the survival suits within easy reach—water surface temperatures hover around the mid-forties in November.

Our destination this morning is the egg-take facility at Sullivan Springs, which is on Granite Creek, one of the many tributary streams that flow out of the Green Monarchs into Lake Pend Oreille.

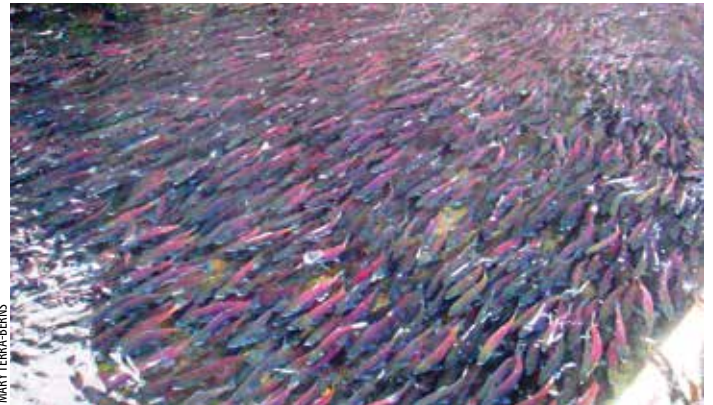
MARY TERRA-BERNS

Kokanee, landlocked sockeye salmon, are congregating at the Granite Creek–Lake Pend Oreille confluence and are gradually moving upstream to spawn and die—the salmon circle of life. Our mission today is to collect eggs and milt from the kokanee that get waylaid at the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) egg-take station, just a short distance upstream from the lake.

Kokanee were introduced into Lake Pend Oreille in the early 1930s, the result of a flood event that washed the fish out of Flathead Lake, down the Flathead River, and into the Clark Fork River, which flows into Lake Pend Oreille. These tasty salmon quickly established a thriving population and became an enthusiastically sought-after species for sport and commercial fishing. Kokanee also became the primary prey species for the trophy rainbow trout as well as lake trout or mackinaw, another introduced species.

When the Cabinet Gorge Dam was built in 1952, kokanee migrating to spawning tributaries on the Clark Fork River were stymied. To mitigate the loss of habitat from hydropower construction, Cabinet Gorge Hatchery, the largest kokanee hatchery in the world, was built in 1985. The hatchery can accommodate twenty million kokanee eggs and can rear about sixteen million fish until they are two inches long. That's a lot of eggs to collect, which helps our zero dark thirty departure from Hope.

We toss our gear bags into the boat, climb in, and settle into the cabin for our trip to Granite Creek. We sip our coffee, watch the snow fall, and hope the wind doesn't start kicking up whitecaps on the lake. Lake Pend Oreille is the biggest and deepest lake in Idaho (the fifth-deepest in U.S.), reaching depths of 1,158 feet. When you're out in the middle, it feels like you're on an ocean. The depth creates acoustic properties similar to the open ocean, which is why the U.S. Navy operates an Acoustic Research Detachment to test submarine prototypes [see "Bayview Spotlight," *IDAHO magazine*, December 2012]. Farragut State Park, which was the second largest naval training station during World War II, is located next to the Acoustic Research Detachment in Bayview.



FAR ABOVE: The egg-take crew at the spawning table.

ABOVE: Granite Creek kokanee stacked up.





IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

ABOVE: Coolers for the eggs as the boat crosses Lake Pend Oreille.

After about an hour, Ron deftly maneuvers the boat alongside the Granite Creek dock where other IDFG employees, including station supervisor Jaime Mitchell, are waiting to help ferry equipment and supplies up the trail to the egg-take station. As the sky lightens, the silhouettes of mountains and trees take shape, even though an army of snowflakes continues to drift down on us. I follow the snowflakes as

they drop into Granite Creek, where thousands of dark-green heads with trailing red bodies are stacked up. Thousands of Christmas-colored fish is a sight that never fails to amaze me. Kokanee, referred to as “bluebacks” by the locals, are silver before the hormonal changes kick in and not nearly as dramatic as they are in their holiday colors.

Becky, Ron, and I don our

neoprene chest-waders and wading boots, rain slickers, wool hats, and insulated rubber gloves. As we prepare to enter the holding pond, I'm thinking, "This is going to be really, really cold." However, I don't have time to dwell on the temperature once we get in and start gathering the net, which rests at the bottom of the pond, to consolidate the fish that have been hindered by the weir. Females are separated from the males and go into a tub.

Snow is still coming down as we line up in front of the spawning table. Ron is an old hand here, but Becky and I are rookies, so we watch Jamie to get the knack of the procedure. Handling a fish and applying just the right amount of pressure to release the eggs isn't something you learn in Fisheries 101. After processing several fish, we achieve egg-take efficiency and graduate to accomplished "squeezers."

With our newly developed skill, we start processing with purpose. There is a relaxed banter as the crew methodically works to fill the bowl in front of us with tiny, pink eggs. Milt from the males is obtained in the same way and is incorporated evenly into the bowl to fertilize the eggs. We drop fish that have donated eggs or milt into a hopper that moves them through a PVC pipe to a large tub. Mimicking the salmon life cycle, these fish will be returned to the stream channel to provide nutrients and food for opportunistic feeders like coyotes, eagles, ravens, and raccoons, among others.

We have been busily gathering and processing fish for a few hours when it occurs to me that I am not cold at all—love that neoprene! But my stomach is growling, so I'm delighted when we break for lunch in the small cabin next to the egg-take station. Jaime has the woodstove going and a table blanketed with lunch fixin's. Working in the cold requires a lot of energy, and we all pile our plates high. Once our stomachs are content and before we get too relaxed, we gear up and head back to the fish for a few more hours.

When the sun starts to silhouette the Selkirk Mountains to the west, we shut down the station for the day. Millions of fertilized eggs have been transferred to coolers and are now secured in the boat for their

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MARTY BERNS

ABOVE: At the Granite Creek dock.

journey to Cabinet Gorge Hatchery. When they arrive, John Rankin, the hatchery manager, will place the eggs in incubators for a few months. By June, the eggs will be two-inch fry. John and his crew will release the fry at several locations around Lake Pend Oreille, including Sullivan Springs.

Becky and I pull off our waders and stow them in our gear bags. We appreciate the warm clothes we

brought for our return trip to Hope. Ron warms up the boat while several bald eagles, perched in the trees around the dock, watch us double-check the coolers before we push off from the dock. They're ready to roost for the night, their stomachs full of kokanee. Thankfully, the lake is quiet and the water is calm for a tranquil return trip. It's zero dark thirty when we arrive at the dock in Hope. ■





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# OF SILENCE AND



NPS/BLM

On my way to Craters of the Moon National Monument, where I intend to view the only eclipse of the sun I'm likely to see, I stop in Carey for a cup of coffee, and see how things have changed there in the past three years. The grocery store that gathered a hustle and bustle of customers now collects only tumbleweeds, and the sprawling bar just east of town is out of business. Windows are broken in the front rooms of a slightly frumpy hotel of cabins, which

resembles a hotel on Route 66 twenty years after the route was changed. But you've got to admire the pluck of Carey's residents in planting an official sign at the edge of town advising, "Carey On!" That, it seems, is the theme of my plan.

I've visited Craters at least eight times in the last twenty years and seldom has it been easy. Once was for a burial of the monument's former superintendent. Twice on the way to Yellowstone I drove the

seven-mile scenic route. But most of my visits to Craters have led me into the black lava land, that pale green sagebrush landscape in a too-hot or too-cold atmosphere drier than a popcorn cooking pot, or to the back side of nowhere, walking this indescribable land for miles and miles and miles. At some point, when I realized that no place else had the bleakness and spare beauty of Craters of the Moon, it became my kind of place.



# SANITY

## AMID BEAUTY BLEAK AND SPARE

BY MIKE MEDBERRY



I don't expect forgiveness for my mistakes out in this wilderness. Only people forgive here: the place forgives no one and I've learned to be prepared for anything, as the Boy Scouts say. But if I go in spring, I expect the beauty of flowers and lighting. Blazing star flowers bloom an extravagant yellow under the 180-proof sunlight. Hot-pink dwarf monkey flowers surprise me. I'm soothed by the flawless perfection of tiny Bitterroot flowers, the off-white

buckwheat flowers that dribble across cinder fields like spilled milk, and the lovely white scablands penstemon that grow out of pure lava like a holy flame of promise. Each is out there if I search, and time my visit in May or early June rather than this mid-summer trip.

The blackness of Craters' night skies has won the distinction of a Silver Tier International Dark Sky Park from the International Dark Sky Association. In the crystalline air,

the brilliance of the stars testifies to how the Milky Way was named. The air quality, designated Class 1, by law won't be allowed to degrade. But this also can be a disorienting, deceptive location—for example, when your compass finds the north pole on a magnetic outcrop to the south, or when the seemingly flat, featureless land looks as if it stretches until the end of time but proves to provide rugged terrain fifty feet in front of you. Nights are frigid

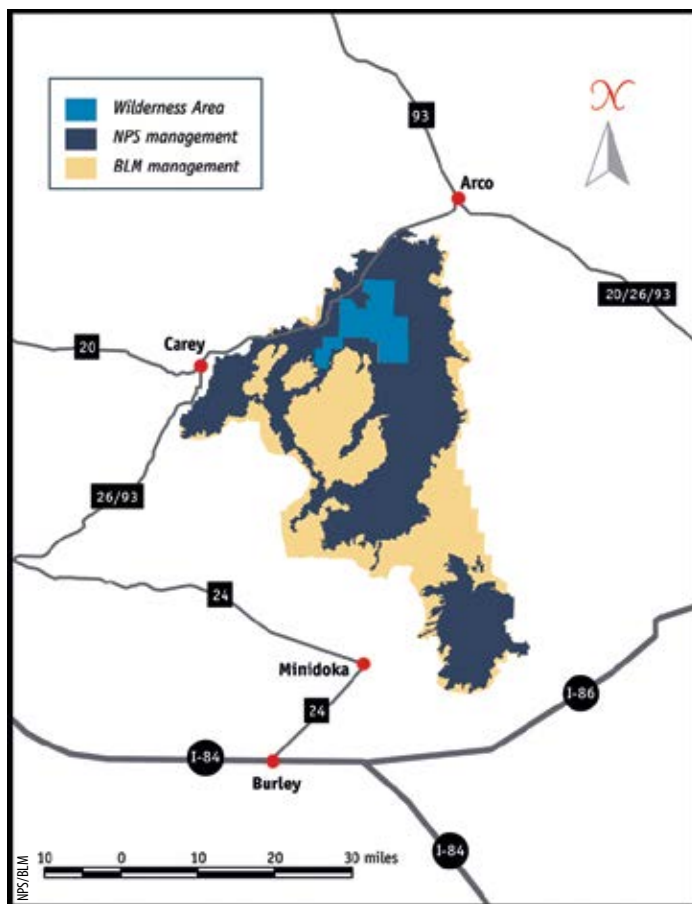
OPPOSITE: Lava and cinders at Craters of the Moon.

ABOVE LEFT: One of the cracks in the Great Rift.

FAR ABOVE: The visitor center.

ABOVE: Dwarf monkey flowers.





in winter and days are smacked with heat in the midst of summer, although animals such as bats, owls, snakes, coyotes, deer, antelope, sage grouse, pikas, and dwarf rabbits do just fine, having found favorable micro-habitats.

At the visitors' center, I'm the first person of the day to fill out a permit to hike into the wilderness and camp at Echo Crater. For that matter, so far nobody else has sought a permit for all of the 43,243-acre Craters of the Moon Wilderness within the much larger national monument and preserve. I'm surprised, because of the hype about the Great American Eclipse happening tomorrow. So

I fill my backpack with the stuff I'll need to survive and drive the seven-mile route to the farthest end. The wilderness looks just the same as it did last year—it has changed very little since its designation in 1970.

I arrive at where the wilderness begins: beyond the modestly developed campsites, beyond the popular and interesting North Crater Trail, beyond the Devils Orchard Nature Trail, the Infernal Cone, all those curious spatter cones, the defined caves, and beyond the absolutely magical Blue Dragon flow to the trailhead. Most people don't get this far, and a number of my Facebook friends criticized me for

considering hiking here in August, when the temperatures are soaring, but I figured (correctly) it would mean few tourists. Even so, I've taken my friends' warnings to heart, having brought along two gallons of water for a two-day trip, even if that seemed excessive.

Underfoot is the crackling crunch that makes walking over cinders sound like marching on cereal. I cross the easily-walkable Little Prairie to the cirque of Echo Crater, where I can choose among seven fine campsites under the lava cliffs that loom five hundred feet high. This crater is not a circular hollow cut in stone by glaciers, the true

ABOVE LEFT: This map shows the monument's management areas.

FAR ABOVE: Echo Crater.

ABOVE: A mule deer at Craters.

definition of a cirque. It was created by a massive explosion that cast basalt sky-high, leaving a hole in the ground like a bomb crater. To me, this powerful place embodies the beauty of solitude.

I discovered Echo Crater more than ten years ago, when I temporarily lost my Brittany spaniel, Camas. Searching for her, I climbed to the top of the crater and saw an Edenic green place far below. I called out my dog's name and heard back, "Camas! Camas! Camas!" Naturally, I immediately liked the name Echo Crater. Camas and I had hiked here after I had an ischemic stroke in 2000 in a trail-less place in Craters [see "Moonstruck," *IDAHO magazine*, February 2013]. I was wounded and wanted silence to figure out what having a debilitating stroke could mean. When I felt recovered, I craved the solitude that Craters of the Moon offered—the wilderness was silent and sane.

I had never been a quiet person, but the stroke forced silence and humility upon me, and I went back to reclaim what I'd lost. That year—after I found Camas beside Echo Crater—we walked through a still and rugged ocean of lava. It was a foolish mission to prove that I still could endure the heat of summer as a stroke survivor. Camas dragged and panted as we walked through seemingly

endless lava in the hundred-degree-plus air temperature, the lava radiating heat in waves above the rock. The heat, surreal and intense, cooked both of us to well done. We came across the merciful shade of a lone and sprawling limber pine., and there we sat. Call it a miracle to find shade in this unforgiving desert or call it luck—we called it a cool place to sleep under a limber pine tree.

We scared a great horned owl from its roost in that pine and it flew out into the hellish day. I wished it luck finding another refuge. I couldn't see one and prayed for its safety, and for ours. Camas drank water from my cup and I from the jug, and we slept in the shade until the temperature dropped. We woke refreshed, walked to the other side of the flow in the northern part of Laidlaw Park, and found what seemed a tremendously fresh array of grasses and a few surviving flowers. Beyond, the aspens of Snowdrift Crater grew keen and vigorous in the deep green of the cool evening shade. We crept on to my car. I wondered what on earth we were doing in that oven. Camas slept as I drove, and didn't hear my apology to her.

Now, on my latest visit to Echo Crater, the eclipse of the sun will come in the morning. I find the very best

camping spot below soaring cliffs in the shade of a grove of tall limber pines. I shelter in a rock stadium that's flat and cool in the midst of the harsh high desert. The quiet of the place seems eerie compared to my city life in Boise, until hornets come buzzing to my campsite. What are they doing here? Water, of course! They need water and my sweat must seem sweet to them, God forbid. They must have come from a source of water, I surmise, but the closest spring, Yellowjacket Waterhole, is a small seep that can serve little more than one of its namesake bugs. I've seen yellowjackets at that bit of water, but it's more than a mile from here.

I put out a dish of water for them, far away from my sleeping spot, which works for a few minutes, until they find the sugar on my trail snacks and return. But all they really need is water and sugar, and they seem friendly enough. For hornets. I



## MOVING?

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sleep and wake several times in Echo Crater as the day cools and the hornets investigate me.

A group of four sage thrashers swoop and land on a nearby rock outcrop. They hop-scotch in the air and land on another boulder. It goes on like that for a minute or so until they see me watching and stop their game. "Silly birds," I call to them. They quickly fly to another set of perches, watch me for a moment or two and soon become oblivious. Above, a group of twelve or thirteen mourning doves fly in a military formation around the crater and land in an apparent nesting spot on the side of the cliff. They coo and oooh, circle again and again, and fly out of the crater in that same tight formation, as if flung from a sling.

Some years back, I was on the east side of the national monument, amid tall sagebrush and puffs of Great Basin wild rye grasses, when an eclipse of the moon occurred. As the moon appeared and then slowly was effaced by the earth's shadow, the world came to a simple stop without the moon as its partner, and I held my breath without thinking. Then the moon glanced out beyond the shadow and slipped, sliver by sliver, back to its silvery self again. I wondered what the ancient philosophers would have said of the moon disappearing.

On Little Prairie with Echo Crater as my backdrop, I prepare myself for the eclipse of the sun.

Little Prairie is a kipuka (the Hawaiian word for "window," I've been told) that runs from the end of the road out beyond Echo Crater. When the Craters of the Moon lava was molten about two thousand years ago, which is recent in geologic time, Little Prairie lay a bit higher than the flow and thus escaped it. But this prairie was covered in lava much older than that, and by now has weathered enough to support plants. It's a window into the ecological past isolated from the severe livestock grazing impacts on the Snake River plain.

There are more than five hundred kipukas of various sizes in Craters of the Moon. In Little Prairie, I've seen gopher snakes, sagebrush lizards, ground squirrels, woodchuck, bats, deer, northern harriers, ravens, doves, and many other birds. I've seen a lot of sage grouse sign. Ecologists have documented an impressive number of species living in Craters: three hundred plants, two thousand insects, thirty mammals, fourteen birds, eight reptiles and one amphibian, the western toad. It's good to know there are places in our world where animals still can live relatively undisturbed by surrounding human impacts.

The sun rises and casts a brilliant flame-red glow on the crater's wall, highlighting the chartreuse and saffron colors in a large patch of lichens growing there. Sunlight pours down the lava wall and warms me when it

falls to my level. I clutch my cup of coffee with both hands, sip the liquid joyously, and awaken to this quiet light show. Soon I climb to the top of the crater to watch the eclipse.

As I wait for the show to begin, I wander toward a group of trees in the distance. I cross three parallel cracks in the Great Rift, which are roughly twenty to eighty feet deep and about one hundred feet wide. They look very odd to me, like stretch marks on the earth. Each crack travels less than a mile, starting and stopping irregularly and continuing on. Together they formed a portion of the Great Rift that travels sixty miles in a north-south direction. These cracks indicate a weakness in the earth's crust and are the origin of many lava flows throughout the region, including several flows in Craters of the Moon. There are many parallel cracks, some of which hold water and ice tucked in their floors, which is critical information for a person hiking here in the middle of summer. I think the doves must have found water in these cracks when they flew out of Echo Crater.

Reaching the trees, I notice that they stand in a slightly lower place on the land, in a kipuka that might hold a pool of water in rainy times or snow in the spring. In any case, the depression is deep enough for trees to have germinated. A Clark's nutcracker flies from a tree and squawks at me. The bird looks stately in its





NPS/BLM



MIKE McDERMOTT

mantle of gray and black, a white flash of excellence on its tail. These trees must be a summer home for the nutcracker. I root around and find pretty shards of the Blue Dragon flow: the rich cobalt color is from titanium on the surface of the rock as it cooled thousands of years ago. How it shimmers! Magpie that am, I drop a piece into my pocket, but better person that I occasionally am, I pull it out and throw it back on the ground. The nutcracker watches. They are like that: so judgmental. This one crackles at me—khaa, khraa, kaaa—and flies to tell its story to some wizard of the rock.

When the eclipse is roughly ninety-eight percent complete, I walk back to the crater in the superb silence. A cool breeze blows and crickets have begun to chirp. The darkness deepens but my shadow remains sharp and I take several photos of burned trees to give the sense of the sunburst effect. In seconds, a

sharp light comes from around the sun. The temperature rises and the chirping stops. The only lingering proof of the eclipse is polarized light on limber pines and a bat flying erratically, as bats do, confused at the leaving and coming of sunlight in such a short period.

“Erratic” is a good word for the protection of Craters of the Moon’s landscape. In 1924, it was proclaimed as a roughly 54,000-acre national monument by President Hoover, with the support of a wild raconteur named Robert Limbert and a well-spoken USGS geologist Harold Stearns. They coined the name Craters of the Moon, giving the area rhetorical pizzazz and a look-to-the-sky sort of appeal. Limbert lobbied for the monument designation in Washington, D.C., and wrote a spirited article for *National Geographic*, which added strong public support for protection of the area.

The smaller wilderness area was designated in 1970, and then in 2000, a proclamation by President Clinton expanded the national monument to a seemingly endless sea of 750,000 acres of lava and kipukas. The area was legislatively re-designated as a combined national monument and national preserve, which acknowledged the opinions of ranchers and motorized vehicle users. The bill was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by the president, giving it more full-bodied support than that of a presidential proclamation.

Within the monument and preserve are 495,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), which contain mostly pure lava with a few acres of grasslands that easily could be supported for their wilderness qualities by the state legislature and the U.S. Congress. A WSA is a Bureau of Land Management category of land management. Each WSA is being

ABOVE LEFT: A visitor inspects a lava tube.

ABOVE: Buckwheat flowers on the cinder.



NPS/BIM



MIKE MADERBERY

studied for wilderness designation and until that study is complete, no actions can be advanced to diminish its wilderness value. WSAs do not have a clear management purpose, which means until Congress acts on their behalf, they can only be managed as pseudo-wilderness.

When I think of wilderness, what comes to mind first is the wicked land in Craters of the Moon. I was gladdened and surprised by the Idaho Legislature's support of a plan for the original 54,000-acre national monument to be turned into a national park. The land would get better funding for campgrounds, interpretation, road repairs, wilderness management, scientific studies, collaborative meetings, and outreach publicity. The closest communities, such as Carey and Arco, would get the benefits of

increased visitation to a national park, which always draws more interest than a national monument. I hope it will give businesses in Carey and Arco a glimmering chance of survival, even while designating more wilderness in Idaho.

Craters of the Moon is a unique place on our planet. In its razor-sharp lava, in its infinite but broken blackness, in its solitude and the stark splendor of cinder cones, in the twilight caves and naturally formed rock bridges, in that mystical Blue Dragon flow, but most of all in the delicacy of the plants and in the animals that eke out their lives there, it is unique. In all of this, there is beauty—plus, wonderful stories endure of people who fought against the lava while coming to settle Idaho and Oregon. I believe that care for Craters demands we protect all of the existing species of plants and

animals in that dry environment, even while we wisely interpret its weird volcanic history, invite tourists into the region, and help people around Craters to survive in a tough economy.

There are many odd tales to tell about Craters, some of them equal parts comical and wonderful, some of them akin to lies that have never been debunked. But what do you or I really know about the Bridge of Tears, Amphitheater Cave, Vermillion Chasm, the sad story of Kings Bowl, the Alice in Wonderland curiosity that might be found in a trip to Lasso Cave, or the almost comical Bridge of the Moon? All we can do is go, learn—and be careful in Craters of the Moon, where more than one person has died. Nevertheless, as the nearby townsfolk would have it, we need to “Carey On!”



ABOVE LEFT: Visitors on the lip of Echo Canyon.

ABOVE: At Craters on eclipse day.





CLARK FORK JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL

# A New Breed of Teacher

The Credential: Expertise

BY MIKE TURNLUND

**T**he bright, well-lit gym of Clark Fork Jr/Sr High School is empty except for a handful of students grouped near a single teacher. The students seem meditative as they stand on the tip-off circle at the center of the basketball court. All eyes focus intently on a drone hovering waist-high before them and all ears listen to the teacher,

Marty Jones, as he gives them guidance in his typically soft-spoken way. Something meaningful is taking place.

It's Friday—an experiential-learning track day—and the weather outside is the worst sort that you'll find in north Idaho: it's either late winter or early spring, depending where you sit on the pessimist-optimist continuum. Snow covers the ground, while the dark, low-hanging clouds drip a warm, steady rain. The parking lot is a boot-challenging bog. But the Tech Track is in session, everyone huddled in the warm and dry school

ABOVE: Marty Jones helps students alter a snowmobile drive train to turn a differential.



ABOVE: Marty on the tugboat he helped to build as a teenager.

shop, except for Marty and a small coterie of future drone pilots in the gym.

Marty—Mr. Jones to students—is an older man who retired and went back to work once already, maybe twice. Somewhere in between those retirements, he has served as science teacher, math teacher, and currently as the career technical education teacher at Clark Fork High School. That's how I came to know him, as a colleague, since I too teach at CFHS, home of the Wampus Cats. I was here before him and most likely I'll be here after him, but it sure has been a pleasure seeing him become one of the most important cogs in our community gear-works.

Marty, part of the ongoing California diaspora, settled in north Idaho by accident. He and his wife Jenny were traveling through Sandpoint in the Idaho panhandle when they both realized this was the place they wanted to live. They found a nearby rural home to purchase, thinking it would be a second home that later would serve for their retirement. But neither of them could face the prospect of returning to Southern California, so they didn't. Instead, they retired early.

Marty's father was a Merchant Marine captain who settled in Long Beach, California, and started a tugboat company, which Marty inherited. For more than twenty years, he plied the waters of the Pacific Coast, once journeying to the Gulf of Mexico by way of the Panama Canal. And he built boats, too. After high school, he attended the University of Michigan,

COURTESY OF MARTY JONES

where he earned a degree in nautical engineering and marine architecture. Those many nights at sea must have inspired him, because he also became an avid and learned amateur astronomer.

After he retired to his new home near Sandpoint, Marty discovered that the high school was in need of a science teacher. Clark Fork sits about twenty minutes away from his home, as one heads toward the Montana border. While he wasn't particularly in need of a job, he thought that he would enjoy the work. So he applied. And got it.

I've been teaching at CFHS for twelve years, and I have the fun job: teaching electives, the courses most students want to take, rather than the ones they have to take. It makes a difference. Marty does the same now, but when he was a science teacher, he taught all the required courses, such as biology, chemistry, and physical science. Yet he also taught those things he was passionate about, such as astronomy and a technology exploration course he called Invention & Design. As math teacher, he was our entire department, teaching all the required math courses. His math elective? Calculus, or trigonometry, or some combination thereof. Most of our students would never darken the door of those elective courses, but the ones that did thrived.

As a new hire, Marty started out teaching science and, oh, there were tears! He had the misfortune of replacing a long-standing and well-loved science teacher who had retired after instructing two generations of CFHS students. Marty had never taught at a high school, but what could be so hard about teaching teenagers? Well, he struggled, and the students struggled. In time, both sides got things worked out and developed an enduring affection for the other, but in the interim, I served as an impromptu counselor for more than a few upset students and parents. (Marty doesn't know I did that, so don't tell him.) All of us on the staff at CFHS admired his dogged determination to become the instructor the students needed.

But Marty's at his best as leader of the Tech Track, part of the school's innovative and unique experiential-learning track program (*IDAHO magazine*, Sept. 2016). In that venture, I'm Marty's helper, as a former automobile mechanic. Yes, I used to turn a wrench to make a living, but Marty makes me look like a poser! When I visited him at



CLARK FORK JR./SR HIGH SCHOOL



CLARK FORK JR./SR HIGH SCHOOL

FAR ABOVE: Teaching students how to operate a CNC router.

ABOVE: Vehicle maintenance training.





CLARK FORK JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL

ABOVE: A welding lesson.

his home this past summer, he had four or five automobile engines, big ones, little ones, all in various stages of being rebuilt. He showed me his metal shop, a near-commercial-grade facility where he fabricates not only his own parts, but often his own tools. This is the guy who leads our Tech Track!

The Tech Track is for students with a penchant to create things. Under Marty's leadership, the definition of "things" is broad and wide. Students can learn about automobiles, how they work, and how they are repaired. They can work with wood, making everything from birdhouses to furniture. They can learn to program a computer or run a computer-operated CNC router, or weld, and so forth. Marty is our jack of all trades and master of them, too. We still would have a Tech Track without Marty as leader, but it would be far more limited in scope. I mean, I can fix cars, but I've not only never programmed a microcontroller but didn't even know what a microcontroller was until I worked with Marty (in case you're not sure, it's a digital tool that can control objects in the physical world).

To me, Marty is representative of a new breed of teachers, who enter the profession without the traditional credentials. Expertise, mastery of content, and many years of experience "in the field" are all there, but not a bachelor's degree in

education. Such new teachers are required to take an alternative route to accreditation while on the job, and I'm glad this option exists in Idaho, or we would have a tough time finding teachers. Here at CFHS, three of our eight current staff members are such professionals: our new math teacher is also a metallurgical engineer and our current science teacher is a former staff biologist with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. I took the traditional route and returned to college to get my master's degree in education so I could teach the social sciences, but sometimes I feel inadequate.

Back in the gym last winter, the drone not only got off the ground at the hands of its budding remote-operator pilots, but it did meaningful things. It mapped out the local area of the school, the football field, and the slowly developing disc-golf course. It overflowed and documented the restoration of the Clark Fork River Delta. And it eventually crashed. Badly. The school is still hoping for funds to replace it and get a drone back into the hands of our students, but the truth is that the drone was not originally the school's. It was Marty's.

To use the vernacular, that's how Marty rolls. He came to public education, saw a need, and filled it. Again and again. I never would have imagined that someone who hadn't formally taught a lick in his life could become so irreplaceable. ■

# Generation Wild

## Finding Direction through Solitude

BY KEVON BJORNSON

**M**y older brother Brian tossed me the net, handing over the responsibility of nabbing the fish on the end of thirteen year-old Jack's line. I gripped it tightly and searched the water.

A moment later, the fish broke the surface a few yards away, a gorgeous brown trout of about seventeen inches, its prominent dark spots glimmering along the side of its body. My vision locked onto the silhouette drifting beneath the Owyhee River. The trout took a few strong pulls, bending the rod and making Jack's face grimace in determination. Slowly, the trout grew

BELOW: Brian Bjornson with a program participant named Megan and a freshly caught brown trout.







BRIAN BORRISON

tired and inched closer to where I stood. Moments later, the nose of the fish peaked slightly above the current. I went after it in a sweeping motion, aiming at its head. The fish fell through the circular rim and into the rubber netting.

We had it. Jack had successfully landed his first fish on a fly rod. Our anticipation came to an abrupt halt as I stood holding the weight of the fish inside the net. In the moment of stillness that arose around us, I noticed my heart beating rapidly and my hands trembling in excitement, a response stronger than at any time I had caught a fish on my own. I glanced up at the enthrallment covering Jack's face. Our eyes connected, and I knew exactly what he was feeling. It wasn't long ago I was also thirteen, searching for this same

species hidden in the depths of the same water. I recently heard someone say that to search is the meaning of life, which made me consider the thought in relation to fly fishing. It reminded me of when I first started studying the art of fly fishing and read a quote by Henry David Thoreau: "Many men go fishing all their lives without realizing it is not fish they are after."

As my journey in fly fishing continued, I realized Thoreau was right. I wasn't searching for trout—every time I reached for the rod, I was on a quest to find myself. The trout gave me an excuse to look into my inner being and contemplate the life surrounding me. Anything I caught during a day fishing was a bonus. Fly fishing was the path that guided me to self-discovery and to a life of mindfulness. Being immersed in the act of

catching a fish became a form of meditation that connected my soul to the world around me. It engaged me in the complete life cycle of a mayfly, exposing me to life and death all in one day. I saw trout sip these mayflies off the surface as I attempted to match the look and actions of the insects with an imitation of their form inside the fly box. Such experiences exposed me to the interconnected web of life, bringing the realization that rather than being separate from this web, I was part of it.

A couple years back, my brother and I got to talking. We felt that the generation growing up today needs this experience of connectedness more than ever, even though we arguably live in a world that is more "connected" than ever. Social media sites litter smart phone screens, seemingly attaching us

ABOVE: The author and Danner, a program participant, fish a small run of the Owyhee River.



to all parts of the world. The fly rods my brother and I held in our childhood have been replaced by phones and tablets in kids' hands today. They may appear connected but it's intangible, a virtual reality that results in kids feeling less connected even while more attached. A recent study done by Common Sense Media, a nonprofit dedicated to helping young people to thrive amid contemporary media and technology, reports that teens in the United States spend nine hours a day consuming entertainment media. Brian and I saw fly fishing as an opportunity for kids to separate themselves from technology and societal influences while connecting to the natural world. This conversation was the seed that sprouted into a nonprofit we started, which we called Generation Wild Idaho.

Our mission is to seek to provide purpose and direction in the lives of youths through outdoor recreation and fly fishing. We provide the opportunity for young people to gain exposure to the beauty of creation free of charge to them, while establishing friendships and sharing our passion for the outdoors. The scene with Jack was one from a summer partnership trip our group organized with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. We spent the day fishing the Owyhee River. Jack caught the fish at the second spot we tried, but as our stomachs grew hungry and we approached lunch, young Braden still hadn't caught anything.

During lunch, as Jack finished his apple and Braden worked on his second sandwich, I looked at the vast Owyhee Canyon and imagined in its place a

BELOW: Jack (left) and Brian exchange high fives while Kevon holds the first fish Jack ever caught on a fly rod.





BRIAN ROBINSON

couch with a television screen six feet in front of the boys. In my imagination, the glowing TV screen illuminated their young faces, but out here, the light came from their smiles, which testified to how fully engaged and aware they were of the moment.

The day reeled to an end and it was time to break down the rods and head back to Boise, but Braden still longed to catch a fish. Of course,

sometimes they aren't biting, and there's simply nothing you can do about it. I was downriver with Jack, and we had already clipped the flies off and reeled in the line. Upriver, I saw the silhouettes of Braden and my brother standing in the water, Braden's small frame casting in a rhythmic manner that looked quite graceful. I could tell he didn't want to leave, and Brian later confirmed that Braden had said, "I want to

fish 'til dark. I'm going to catch one of these fish."

I'm sure my brother had to pry the rod out of his hand, but the day was far from a failure for Braden. It ensured that he will continue to search the water's depths. Through that process, he'll discover many trout, but more important, the search will lead him to the discovery of things within himself that he never knew existed. ■

ABOVE: The group also sponsors summer hikes at Military Reserve in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Ada County.



# Auction Day

## In the Town Where Bidding for Charity Began

BY MADGE COOK WYLIE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MADGE COOK WYLIE

In a way, the story of Melba is less about where it's going than where it has been.

The town may be not much more than a wide spot on the road to nowhere nowadays, but it got on the map with the emergence of an epidemic that began spreading in the late-1940s. Infantile paralysis, which was running rampant in the country, struck several families in the Melba area. My family's nearest neighbors, the Crams, who had ten children, were quickly affected. David and Mary went to the hospital—Mary for two weeks and David for two months. After that, David went to what was then the Elks' Convalescent Home for Children in Boise, where he stayed for four months, followed by outpatient care for the next two years.

Their mother, Leola Cram, read the story of Sister Kenny, who had devised a method of heating wool blankets in boiling hot water and applying them to children affected by polio, the short name for the paralysis. Leola told me she heated blankets and sat up all night, tending to the children. The next year, Jack Cram, who not been charged a dime for his children's care, gave five hundred dollars to the March of Dimes drive.

Among other children in the valley who were affected by the disease was Brandt Reynolds, a fifteen-year-old who contracted a debilitating form of it called the bulbar type. June Trauernicht was thirteen when she was stricken with two types of polio. Following about two years in the hospital, she spent the rest of her days in a wheelchair and slept in an iron lung. Paralyzed from the neck down, she nevertheless graduated cum laude from Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, where she majored in speech and hearing. She traveled to the College of Idaho to take a class in experimental psychology and later went to Idaho State



FAR ABOVE: The first Melba charity auction, 1950.

ABOVE: Sophia Fease and Frances Smith tend to cakes on a sawhorse table, 1955.





ABOVE: Walt Fine inspects a gun to be auctioned.

University in Pocatello, earning a master's degree in speech and audiology. She was employed at the Idaho State School for many years, always working with the most disabled, while she herself remained paralyzed. We all were touched by the epidemic. I had a couple of children and younger siblings who could have been victims.

When the situation arose in our valley, a group of farmers led by Ora Stokes, the grandfather of several children, met to discuss what to do in response. They decided upon an auction form of fundraising and selected the closest Wednesday in 1950 to the birthday of President Roosevelt, a lifetime sufferer from infantile paralysis.

Some of the leaders, including Stokes' son-in-law, Gordon Vogelsson, who was our town's maintenance guy and village constable, went door-to-door to invite people to participate in the auction. Everyone pledged something—baby calves, bales of hay and unused machinery from the men, and canned fruit, loaves of homemade bread, doilies, pillow slips, and other crocheted items from the women.

When auction day arrived, objects filled a parking lot near the high school. Everyone brought something and everyone bought something. At the end of the day, a very satisfying result was declared: \$2,800 had been raised, all of which was sent to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

After that first year, an auction was held in Melba annually for the Polio Foundation, as it was called. School was let out because, at first, it was held

on a Wednesday near Roosevelt's birthday. In the auction's second year, \$3,800 was raised.

Other auctions started up around the country, soon numbering about three thousand, but for ten years, Melba continued to raise more money per capita than any place in the United States. By then, the epidemic was over, and a vaccine had been formulated. Our kids all received inoculations. By the time my youngest child, Jerry, was five years old, children were given a pill rather than an injection.

The Melba community decided it was time to spread the wealth around to other charities, but organizers were notified by the Polio Foundation that all our money was obligated to them. The group, which was now called the Melba Charity Auction, broke with the polio organization and gave to causes such as treatment and prevention of heart disease, cancer, blindness, and juvenile diabetes, as well as to local youth groups, such as Boys' State, Girls' State, and 4-H. After the auction had been going for many years, the organization started giving five thousand dollars annually to our Quick Response Unit, although that ceased after the QRU became a taxable unit as part of the Melba Volunteer Fire Department. A percentage of the money we raised was retained for local tragedies, such as house fires or sicknesses.

For a long time now, the real attraction to the auction each year hasn't been the choice of items to buy, but the food. To this day, each person who attends is asked to bring two homemade pies. For years, men and women of the Walter's Butte Grange cooked "bushels" of egg noodles in the school kitchen the day of the auction. The Rebekahs made popcorn balls each year. A few citizens were experts at homemade candy, such as fudge and divinity. On auction day, they sold candy to students in the classrooms, and because the school kitchen was busy, sack lunches were made and sold to the kids, which was a treat for them.

Eventually, state school authorities determined that students couldn't take a day off for something so insignificant as raising money for charity, which meant the auction had to be rescheduled for the last Saturday of each January. A highlight of each auction day was a contest among fancy cakes, some of which were sold several times, bringing several hundred dollars for each sale. Joan Noe and Doris VanSchoiack built a cake each year that incorporated the



FAR ABOVE: In the auction's early years, quilts were a prime offering, along with fancy bread and canned delicacies.

ABOVE: Shortly before her death, Rexine Dawson Reizenstein made this gorgeous quilt in 2000, which was bought by her family for more than one thousand dollars.





ABOVE: Frankie Higgins made this quilt using T-shirts from past Melba Fourth of July Fun Runs.

auction's theme. One year, when I made a huckleberry pie to be sold by the piece, the woman at the pie table suggested I take it up to the auctioneers to be sold separately. Scott, my editor at the newspaper, bought it for \$106. I continued to do that for a few years. Since huckleberries are not native to this part of Idaho, my son Larry, who lives at Priest Lake, still picks those tiny delicacies one by one (you can't strip them off the stems like gooseberries or currants) and hauls them down here when he comes home each year to spend the winter.

We've continued to have the charity auctions, but in some years, the apathy in the community has been apparent. Nevertheless, a few people would gather and organize another auction for the following year. My job all that time has been to do the publicity, which includes getting articles in area papers and putting out a flyer in advance of the day.

To me, the important part of auction day is the volunteers who see that it gets done. Auctioneers from around Canyon County have taken turns showing up to keep the event going. This year, David Harrington, who aspired to be an auctioneer from a very young age, will take the gavel. Edith Pease has been managing the purse strings for nearly twenty years, making sure that money raised is distributed the proper recipients.

Our town, where the auction form of raising money for charity started nearly seventy years ago, may be fading away, but the spirit of those engaged in auction day prevails. Every year, here come the bales of hay and the baby calves and puppy dogs. Pies fill the pie tables, the homemade noodles look scrumptious, and you can smell chili wafting from one end of town to another.

The sixty-ninth consecutive Melba Community Auction will be held on January 20, 2018, because of a conflict with high school basketball games on the last Saturday in January. The auction will start at 10 a.m. in the high school gym. People will gather from all over the Boise Valley to visit, enjoy the food, and spend a few bucks for charity. ■

BOB HIGGINS



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Deanne Hally '81



# BASALT

## A HIDDEN GEM

**BY GERALDINE MATHIAS**

Occasionally, I take projects to a quilter friend who lives on Goshen Road, several miles northeast of Firth. To get there, I pass by a small town called Basalt. Signs on each end of the city welcome visitors to the town, but until recently I had never driven through it. The name Basalt reminded me of a years-ago Idaho State University geology course taught by Dr. Tom Ore (could there have been a more appropriate name?). We learned to identify all manner of local formations, but especially lava. Basaltic lava was one of them, for good reason. Ancient flows are found in numerous places along the Idaho batholith. Interstate 15 North crosses a prominent easternmost flow on the southern edge of the batholith.



COURTESY OF CAROLYN LYON



GERALDINE MATHIAS

LEFT: Painting by Deanne Hally of a stone barn on the Larson family property in Basalt, built by the Jensen family in 1905.

ABOVE: The town's welcome sign.





COURTESY OF CAROLYN LYON

ABOVE: Painting by Deanne Hally of the rock house in Basalt once owned by the Larson family.

Basaltic lava comes from shield volcanoes that erupt liquid magma rather than ash or rocks. Hence, we see mostly cracks or fissures and few domes around here, although domes also can be shield volcanoes. The flow that early 19th Century trappers named Hell's Half Acre spreads widely throughout the valley and is estimated to have experienced its latest activity around five thousand years ago, relatively recent in geologic time.

In spite of Basalt's name, which never intrigued me because it called forth images of black rock and sagebrush, it is what I have come to consider a hidden gem. Except for the sign along Highway 91 about a half-mile north of Firth, you might not know it's there, but turn off the highway, drive another half mile, and there you are—population 394 in the last census. If I were a movie producer looking for a place to shoot a film set in the 1940s or '50s, I would consider Basalt. Its wide, quiet streets with lots of huge trees, older

homes, and expansive yards make parts of it look like a place out of the past.

In the beginning, it wasn't called Basalt and wasn't located at the present site. In the late 1870s, the Oregon Short Line Railroad reached the area with a narrow gauge track from Utah and established a siding, a water tower, and a mail drop dubbed Basalt. This provided access to land across the Snake River Plain, and settlers, primarily Latter Day Saints, began to stream in. Around 1885, a small group of them settled along the Snake River and the railroad, naming their settlement Cedar Point.

As in other desert communities, getting water to the parched land was of primary importance. According to a history compiled by Warland Larson, a few pages of which were published in the 1985 *Basalt Centennial Book*, it took several years to complete the Cedar Point Canal, because the workers had only primitive tools. Ironically, it

seems that although digging the canal was necessary to produce crops, the area was also prone to flooding. Early in the 1900s, a town was platted on higher ground that overlooked Cedar Point. In 1906, it was incorporated and named Basalt. Eventually, the settlement of Cedar Point moved to the new site.

Unfortunately, the railroad had abandoned the siding by 1902 because of the steep grade, which made it difficult to get the trains moving again. The settlers fought to keep it, but according to the *Bingham County History Book*, (Bingham County Historical Society, 1990) their efforts were ignored. The railroad posted a notice in the *Pocatello Tribune*: "As far as the Oregon Short Line affairs are concerned, Basalt is a matter of history. A new siding called Firth is three thousand feet long. A loading track has also been put in." Basalt did get to keep its post office, which was located in a home.

The town was laid out in sixteen ten-acre blocks with one-acre lots, which explains why many of the homes on lots that were not subsequently subdivided have generous lawns, front and back. By 1919, the Bingham County Assessor's map included surrounding acreages as part of the town and defined the boundaries

between Shelley, Goshen, Firth, and Basalt.

At the Firth Post Office, Sharon Ricks, who grew up in Basalt and still lives there, gave me a short list of folks I should talk to. She shared with me her only copy of the *Basalt Centennial Book*, put together in 1985 for the town's one hundredth birthday. I was surprised to learn that Basalt, which has had a town board since 1908, still has a city council, a mayor, and a part-time clerk at City Hall.

In personal histories written by residents for the Centennial, I found that many of their pioneer



COURTESY OF MONA PRESTWICH

ABOVE: Tena Berg signs the Idaho Mothers' Charter, 1960s.

BELOW: Berg family ancestral homestead, circa 1910.



COURTESY OF MONA PRESTWICH



ABOVE: When the town's second LDS church was built, some residents were displeased that all the trees around it were cut down.

ancestors struggled at first but persisted. Otto Inglestom and his wife arrived among the early homesteaders in 1885. Two years later, Otto built a pigeonhole desk in their bedroom, which became the post office. As in many pioneer communities, the first order of business was building a school. Initially it was a one-room log building, located approximately where the potato processing plant is today. Another school went up just north of the Basalt cemetery, and the final one was a two-story structure in town, to which an additional four rooms were added around 1920.

Minnie Jensen Thornton described the grand house her father built in 1905. Rock was quarried from Wolverine Canyon for the home, which had a bathroom that worked with the help of a horse that went round and round, to pump water up to a tank in the attic, providing a gravity-flow system for the house. It also had carbide lights, a gas system that required a tank in the basement, and little lantern-like fixtures in each room. After some research, I concluded that the house she described eventually became the home of several generations of the Larson family.

Minnie wrote about a couple of unusual uses of the house:

"Our basement was used to lay out the dead.

Mr. Freeman and Mr. Croney always made the caskets and the Relief Society dressed them. I heard at church that the dead shall rise again. Bee [her sister] and I would look through the windows to see if any dead had come alive (they never did!) . . . A traveling dentist set up a shop and made and fixed teeth in our basement."

Several long-time residents wrote about "The Basalt Migration." Early in the 1900s, the dry farming and homesteading bug bit many residents of Basalt, who created a land rush of sorts to homestead and farm or ranch on Cedar Creek, Spring Creek, or Trail Creek. There they spent late spring into fall ranching cattle or sheep or dry farming crops. Ellis Armstrong proved up his ground along Minor Creek in only three years, and he noted that about twenty other families also did this. For ice, they covered a snow bank with straw, and it lasted most of the summer. They also cut ice blocks from the river in winter and stored it under sawdust in cellars or sheds, but when lemonade was served, lots of folks refused to drink it, fearing pollution from the river. They had to coexist with nature up in the hills, and rattlesnakes were a part of that. Armstrong's father sent for red pigs and soon the snakes were wiped out.

In about 1919, Basalt was hit hard by the



nationwide flu epidemic. Public meetings, church, school, and just about everything else stopped. When any contagious illness affected the area, no one could leave or enter a home where it existed, and a warning sign was placed on the door. After the illness waned, the house was fumigated, the bedding spread out, and sulphur or some other substance was burned in attempt to kill the germs. But as Lloyd Frandsen wrote, "Since germs do not breathe, it is questionable how much good this did. But it did reduce the bedbug population."

Two sisters, Mona Prestwich and Kathryn Brown, spent an afternoon with me relating stories from their parents and grandparents. They were especially proud of their maternal grandmother, Tena Berg, whose Victorian home—which still stands and is occupied—they loved to visit. John and Tena Berg were married in Logan, Utah, in March 1893. Within a few days, Tena went back to her home in Ovid near Bear Lake to help care for her father, who was ill, and John went on to Snake River country to prepare a home for his bride. Not until June of that year were they reunited, traveling for three days by wagon to their 160-acre homestead near Basalt. They arrived late in the evening, and when Tena awoke the next morning, she cried with disappointment. "All I see is sagebrush!"

But with hard work, they cleared the dratted sagebrush and planted crops. According to a history compiled by Tena's son, Ross, crops were poor that year and prices low. Still, John helped build the canals that irrigate the valley and in their "spare" time, the two built their first home. Like other homesteaders, they planted an apple orchard.

The Snake River flooded a wide area in the spring of 1894 and great effort was put forth sandbagging and hauling straw to protect the farm. A few months later, Tena gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl, who each weighed eight-and-a-half pounds. In 1900, John was called on an LDS mission to Norway, which left Tena to care and provide for the couple's five children. She

traded wheat for flour at the Shelley Mill, but it went bankrupt in 1901 and she lost the seven hundred pounds of flour she had stored there. Generous neighbors and friends supplied her with two hundred pounds of flour and a winter's worth of wood for the stove. After John's return, three more children were born.

In 1908, John was called to serve another mission. Tena and her mother got jobs cleaning the school, which paid them the handsome sum of eleven dollars per month, which they shared. She also boarded a school teacher to bring in another fifteen dollars monthly. She and the children milked cows and churned butter, which they sold to neighbors. Upon John's return, the couple had another set of twins, and then in July 1935, John was killed by a train. Soon after, their daughter Ida died of cancer, and Tena took over the mothering of Ida's two children.

During World War II, Tena's son Newell was killed in Saipan and another son, Lemaun, was injured in New Guinea, later dying in Australia.

BELOW: The Victorian home once owned by John and Tena Berg still stands.



COURTESY OF MONA PRESTWICH



ABOVE: Current Basalt Mayor Larry Wagoner at his place.

ABOVE RIGHT: Sisters Mona Prestwich (left) and Kathryn Brown in Kathryn's home, where they both grew up.



Reminiscing about these losses with her granddaughter, Tena said, "It wouldn't have been so bad, but Lemaun had just joined the Marines a year before Pearl Harbor, and was in Washington on his way home when the Japs (sic) struck, so I never got to see him again." She continued her church duties and also helped in Red Cross work to keep busy and her mind off her boys while they served and after their deaths.

In the early 1960s, she was named Idaho Mother of the year. Kathryn and Mona showed me a picture of her signing the Idaho Mothers' Charter. Always self-effacing, she had to be coaxed to pose for the picture because, "People will think I'm trying to put on."

Mona has spent all her life in Basalt, and Kathryn a good portion of hers. When they were young, Basalt still had a school that went to eighth grade, and high school students were bused to Firth. The Basalt school burned to the ground in May 1958 from a suspected electrical short. The home where Mona and Kathryn grew up was only a block from the school, and their mother, Elida Berg Brown, who suffered from a debilitating disease and had trouble sleeping, noticed the light of the flames in the middle of the night. She called for help, but it was too late. The school was never

replaced and the students were dispersed to Goshen, Shelley, or Firth. Nowadays, all Basalt school-age children are bused to Firth.

The two sisters were among five children who lived in the small house with their parents. Like other longtime residents, they recalled walking to school and feeling safe. Unless it was raining, everyone played outside all the time. Mona said they roller-skated in the basement of the school in the winter. In spite of their mother's illness, both parents loved to fish and often took the family to the Blackfoot River for a day's outing. Whoever caught the most fish had to ride in the back of the pickup on the way home.

Mona said she didn't intend to stay in Basalt forever, but the opportunity to move didn't come. She married Verdell Prestwich, raised her own family, and worked in the quality control lab at a potato processing plant just outside the city limits. Kathryn, who never married, graduated from a business school in Salt Lake City, and in addition to other employment, worked for the State of Utah for thirteen years. Eventually, she returned to Basalt to help Mona care for their aging parents, and she continues to live in the family home. Injured in an auto accident years ago, Kathryn is now unable to walk, but gets around in an electric

scooter. One day I found her outside on the scooter raking leaves.

Carolyn Larson Lyon, who now lives in Firth, grew up in a house in Basalt that her grandparents had owned at one point. A beautiful squared-block house with Victorian décor, it has since been remodeled but Carolyn and I agree they are not entirely improvements. She told me about her grandfather, who arrived in Basalt almost “just off the boat” from Sweden. He learned English, but always maintained his Swedish. Many area settlers were of Scandinavian or Swedish descent and were glad much later on to have this gentleman to talk the “old country” language with them.

Carolyn attended the Basalt school through eighth grade before high school in Firth. She recalled a number of businesses in the town at the time: a bakery, a lumber yard, the post office in the back of the store (now its own little building), a candy shop and, interestingly, a hat shop. Only the post office exists now, the other buildings all replaced by homes.

“We didn’t have street lights for a long time, so in the evenings all the neighborhood kids would just play out on the streets until it got dark,” Carolyn recalled fondly. “That was our signal to go back home.” She played in the beautiful block barn whose architecture matched their house. It had a hay loft and, like other country kids, she and her friends would swing out on the hay lift and jump into a pile of hay below.

“We always raised bum lambs, but we kids made such pets of them that when it came time, we wouldn’t eat them,” she said.

If she thought she was in trouble or wanted to avoid a chore, she would just saddle up her horse and go for a ride. She played piano in a dance band and still does so now at eighty, with four other members who call themselves the Classy Fifties. Carolyn and her husband Wayne taught at Blackfoot High School for many years.

Naiad Jensen, who has spent all her life in Basalt, talked about holiday “doings” of the past, such as big parades, a rodeo, baseball games, and



food. People from all around the surrounding communities came to Basalt because their Fourth of July celebration was “the Best!” Early in the morning, an old cannon down by the river signaled the start of festivities, which went on into the night. Parents and kids all danced to live music, and to the phonograph after electricity arrived.

Kay Kremin, a current city council member, was supervising the removal of a large cottonwood tree near his house when I first saw him. When we visited a few days later, I learned that he and his wife Deanna are not of Basalt’s pioneer stock, having moved to the town in 1968 because they were fed up with “bad” neighbors in Idaho Falls, a city they thought was getting too big. Here, they raised their eight children and cared for two granddaughters as well. Kay was a school maintenance person for many years.

I asked about his work on the city council.

“We meet monthly,” he said, “but we don’t really have a lot of business to take care of.”

His biggest complaints were that council members are slow to take action on proposals and some residents don’t see the need to pay their city fees in a timely manner.

Kay told me the huge Fourth of July

ABOVE: A sure sign that a quilter lives in this Basalt home.





ABOVE: Pioneer Day Parade, 1960s.

OPPOSITE TOP: City Councilman Kay Kremin with bucked-up cottonwood.

OPPOSITE BELOW: Monument to Basalt pioneers on the City Hall grounds.

celebrations, parades, baseball games, and dances I had heard about are no longer held. “The people who organized it are either too old or dead.” The best thing about living in Basalt, he thought, is that it’s quiet and safe. For Deanna and him, it was great place to raise their family. “The school bus picked the children up right out on the corner.”

The city depends on Bingham County for law enforcement, although at least one officer lives in town and three others are in the area. The crime rate is negligible. There was a murder about fifteen years ago, arising from a domestic violence situation in which a man stabbed his wife. Kay says occasionally kids from outlying areas come into town and race around, but usually it’s quiet.

I noticed two cabinet model sewing machines in their living room and asked Deanna if she was an avid seamstress.

“Well, I sew,” she said, “but those are Kay’s. He’s a sewing machine hoarder. He just loves them and buys them at yard sales all the time. Some of them he works on and repairs, but mostly he just likes to admire them for the mechanisms.”

The couple took me into three back rooms of their home, where I counted at least thirty machines of various styles and eras, stacked two or three deep in some areas. After a bit of looking, Kay pulled out his most-prized machine, a vintage Singer hand crank portable, circa 1900, complete

with carved wooden case.

“I keep telling him he needs to sell these now,” Deanna fretted, “because the kids will put them on a yard sale cheap after we’re gone.”

Larry Wagoner has been the mayor of the town for four-plus years. Like the Kremins, he is not a native, but he had relatives here. A long haul trucker until his retirement, he was elected mayor, a paid position, two years after moving to Basalt. I asked about issues in the small town. Right now, he said, the sewer is in rough shape because the cement pipe is old and in places it goes uphill to get to the evaporation ponds on the outskirts of town. Widespread flood irrigating around town gets so much water into the old pipe that it’s hard for it to do its job. The town has received a million dollar federal grant to upgrade the system, put in new pipe, a new valve and flow meter.

“The city does its best to plow snow in the winter,” Larry said, “but our equipment is old, and we have only one city employee to do it.” The town’s streets are in good shape but will need repaving at some point, and Basalt’s town leaders are keeping an eye on a process Bingham County uses that doesn’t include seal coating.

Larry echoed the concerns of others I spoke to in wanting to see a junk ordinance and dog control. I saw lots of domestic animals in town, including chickens, goats, and even milk cows. He also wants



GERALDINE MATHIAS

some way to force all residents to pay city fees.

"A town is a business," he remarked. "Not everyone realizes this, or ignores it if they do."

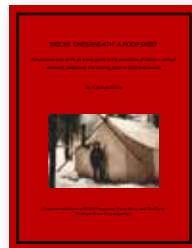
Internet real estate sites recommend Basalt as a good buy. Home prices are comparably low and it's a short commute from Blackfoot, Shelley, or Idaho Falls. I observed several houses being remodeled and modernized for what residents told me were plans to "flip" them. New houses also are being planned or are under way.

Except for a farm stand-type garden across Goshen Road and a small upholstery shop, there is no observable business in town. It's quiet and residents are respectful. I think I'm right. Basalt is a hidden gem. ■



GERALDINE MATHIAS

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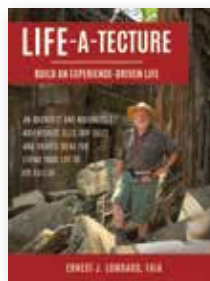


## Bricks Underneath a Hoop Skirt

A humorous look at life as a lady guide in the mountains of Idaho—without electricity, telephone, hot-running water or daily mail service.

BY CAROLYN WHITE

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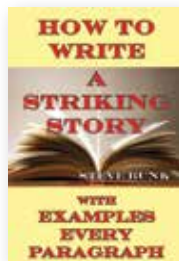


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# The Cobalt Kids

A Mine, Memories, and Electric Cars

BY RUSSELL STEELE

**L**ast August, my wife Ellen and I joined our longtime Salmon friends, Bob and Alberta Wiederrick, for a rock-hunting expedition that would be capped with a view of the total solar eclipse.

I had attended elementary school with Bob at the now-defunct community of Cobalt in Lemhi County, and went to Salmon High with both of them. We had contacted the couple seven months earlier about our plan to return to Idaho from out of state to see the eclipse, and they invited us to join the Salmon Valley Rock Hounds, who were planning an expedition on Trail Creek, which they figured would be an

excellent viewing site.

On our second night at the campsite, the rock hounds traded stories over a throaty roar coming from the bottom half of a propane cooker turned up high enough to provide heat, campfires having been banned because of fire restrictions. As the stories progressed, the rocks got more beautiful, and the hills they were found on became ever-steepier.

The group knew that Bob

ABOVE LEFT: Polished vivianite, often found in its crystal form around Cobalt's old Blackbird Mine.

ABOVE RIGHT: Only a few homes remain today at Cobalt.



and I had lived in Cobalt, and someone across the fire asked if I ever had collected any of the vivianite crystals often found around Cobalt's old Blackbird Mine.

"I'm not a rock collector," I responded, "just a junk collector."

"I've heard the price of cobalt is going up," another rock hound mentioned. "They say electric vehicles are driving up demand for it, because cobalt's an essential component of lithium ion batteries."

I thought this observation was interesting, and mulled over it during our trip home. Did electric vehicle manufacturers control the fate of cobalt mining in Idaho? This led to thoughts of my early life in Cobalt. My parents had built one of the first houses in the area, in September 1949. Dad was an underground mechanic at the time, and later became a logger for the sawmill on Blackbird Creek, which produced timbers and lumber for the mine.

We moved out of state in 1952, as Dad wanted to rejoin the Air Force, which was fighting in Korea. He had been a B-26 pilot in WWII. When we came back to Cobalt in 1956, it had become a bustling community, with a post office, grocery store, and recreation hall. Dad became the rec hall manager and my mom the bookkeeper. My brothers Bob, Ron, and I were enthusiastic about our return to the fishing on Panther Creek and the hunting we had enjoyed a few years earlier. Our memories of life in Cobalt were rich with adventures we'd had on the edge of a wildness area, but we were unaware that in our absence, a break in



the tailings dam had destroyed most of the Panther Creek fishing. We worked at the IGA, set pins in the rec hall's bowling alley, shot pool, and played pinball, until the state took away the machines.

I went to work in the Blackbird open pit after graduation from Salmon High in the spring of 1957. I progressed from water truck driver to driller's helper to swing shift oiler on one of the shovels stripping the burden that covered the cobalt deposit. In late October 1957, my family moved to Pocatello, where I registered at Idaho State College.

Cobalt holds a special place in our family history, but whenever we returned as adults to visit the townsite, we had to watch it languishing and eventually vanishing [see "The Wagon Thief," *IDAHO magazine*, October 2010]. Today only empty foundations and two houses at the miners' end of town attest to past human occupation. The water, power, and sewer facilities

ABOVE: The Salmon Valley Rock Hounds' camp on Trail Creek.



have been removed, the company buildings sold at auction, the market accidentally burned down, and the private homes have been relocated to other communities. The Hill and Stephanishen houses, two blocks down the street from the house we rented in 1956, are the only ones still standing. The owners of those homes are determined to retain access to them until the ninety-nine-year leases expire. But Cobalt days are firmly imprinted in my family's memories, ready to be replayed at Thanksgiving family dinners, which always start, "Remember in Cobalt . . ." Today the few remaining Cobalt Kids share their stories on Facebook.

When Ellen and I returned home after our outing with the rock hunters last summer, I

learned online that cobalt plays a crucial role in the manufacture of electric vehicles. Each lithium-ion battery cell includes cobalt oxides in the positive electrode. As the demand for electric vehicles increases, the demand for batteries with cobalt electrodes is forecast to expand. The critical question is will the expanding electric vehicle market grow large enough to increase the demand for cobalt oxide enough to return cobalt mining to Lemhi County?

My research showed that approximately fifty percent of the world's supply of cobalt comes from Africa, as a byproduct of nickel and copper mining. The Tenke Fungurume Mine in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the largest known cobalt sources

but Tesla, the signature electric vehicle manufacturer, has declared it will meet the company's cobalt needs exclusively from North American sources. The two known North American cobalt deposits are in Idaho and in Ontario, Canada. According to the Northern Prospectors Association, a dozen mining companies are staking out cobalt claims in those two places, as the demand for cobalt oxides forces up the price.

Mining reports show that Lemhi County still has proven cobalt resources. A Canadian mining company called eCobalt Solutions Inc. (formerly Formation Metals) has been working on an Idaho cobalt project for years, coming close to production but never

ABOVE LEFT: The old Blackbird Mine site, 1992.

ABOVE RIGHT: Vivianite crystal.

achieving it. I've followed the project through the years, as the global price of cobalt has risen and fallen with supply and demand. It long has been anticipated by local businesses and is by far the most advanced in the region, although campfire rumors have it that prospectors are exploring additional deposits. One expert expects production to start in a year, although that decision will be subject to a company-sponsored economic feasibility study. The project has received environmental approval from both the National Forest Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

As much as I would like to see cobalt mining return to the glory days of the 1950s, that level of success appears to be a real challenge to achieve. Aside from the United States, ten countries produce cobalt. The top five in metric tons of production are: Democratic Republic of Congo (66,000 MT), China (7,700 MT), Canada (7,300 MT), Russia (6,200 MT), and Australia (5,100 MT). In comparison, the estimated 1,500 MT to be produced annually by the Idaho project over a lifetime of more than twelve years is small. That means Lemhi County would have little control over market prices, which in the end will determine if cobalt mining returns to the Blackbird Region.

The estimated production, about one percent of the global market, is not enough to meet Tesla's requirements. According to a TechCrunch report, a half-million units of the company's vehicles would need the equivalent of



COURTESY OF TED MASESTRETTI

7,800 tons of new cobalt demand, or roughly six percent of annual worldwide cobalt production.

Almost eighty percent of the global auto market is pushing toward phase-out of petroleum cars and adoption of electric vehicles, according to a Bloomberg Intelligence report. California, the largest auto market in the US, is planning to ban the sale of fossil fueled vehicles by 2025. The demand for lithium batteries with cobalt oxides will continue to drive up the price of cobalt.

In September, I was excited to read that a new feasibility study confirmed the Idaho Cobalt Project was economically viable at current global prices. It appears that cobalt mining may well return to Lemhi County, although there are no plans to rebuild Cobalt. Miners will be bused in from Salmon. The robust town of the 1950s will continue to exist, but only in our memories, until all the Cobalt Kids are gone. ■



UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO DIGITAL INITIATIVE

FAR ABOVE: Excavation of the open pit mine at Cobalt.

ABOVE: Cobalt, 1935.





ABOVE: The author and brother Ron Bayok at McCall, circa 1961.

# Two Bears

## And the Humans They Encounter

BY KARLENE BAYOK EDWARDS

**B**ack in 1961, as we drove home to McCall after a week of camping, a large black bear walked out into the middle of the dirt road in front of us.

The bear didn't react to the engine noise of Dad's dark blue 1955 pickup, in which five of us crowded into the front seat: Dad driving, Mother beside him holding my younger brother Ron, and my older sister Barb and I crunched together next to the window. Although we lived in bear country next to what is now the Frank Church–River of No Return Wilderness and spent much of our free time in the mountains, we rarely spotted a bear, so this encounter was something we would all remember.

Dad stopped the pickup and we watched the bear amble down the middle of the road, his shaggy hindquarters swaying from side to side. After a few minutes, Dad restarted the engine and we moseyed on down the road behind the bear. The road was so narrow that had we wanted to pass the bear, there wouldn't have been enough room on either side of him for us to drive around. Dad drove a bit closer, but the bear ignored us.

COURTESY OF KARLENE BAYOK EDWARDS

He tapped the horn, and the bear started walking slightly faster. When he tapped the horn again and gunned the engine a bit, Mom said, "Joe, stop. You'll frighten him." He laughed and told us the bear wasn't scared or he'd have moved off the road a long time ago. It appeared he was right, because the bear continued strolling down the middle of the road.

As we drove closer, the bear began to lope at an easy pace, just fast enough to stay ahead of the pickup. We stared at his muscles gliding beneath his shining black fur, fascinated with his power, his grace. Dad told us that a bear can, at least for short distances, move incredibly fast, and this bear was barely running at all. Clearly, the animal was in charge. It was his road and had been his road long before our pickup appeared behind him.

Dad stopped the vehicle once more, and again we watched. At this point, the bear, having shown us whose road it was, reared up on his hind legs, not erect, but high enough to peer at us for a few moments. Then he gave what seemed to be a disdainful shrug, turned, and sauntered into the trees. We all laughed. It was as if the bear had shown us exactly what he thought of us, and it wasn't much.

We began breathing normally again. The road ahead lay strangely empty and still.

Already we missed the bear, the power of his presence, and the excitement of encountering a being so wild and unafraid.

Back in the 1950s, people living in the McCall area knew Dad was a hunter and that he and Mother butchered their own meat, so it wasn't unusual for someone to ask Dad for help in dressing out an animal, but one time it was different. A Boise man came to ask for his help on the quiet, because he had killed a bear out of season for its skin.

As soon as Dad examined the carcass, he knew it was a nursing sow, and the bear's small cubs were probably in the woods crying for their mother, hungry. Our father rarely lost his temper, although when he did, it was memorable. At such moments, he didn't raise his voice and sometimes he didn't even need to speak. I would have hated to be that man at that instant. I'm certain he never hunted out of season again.

My sister Barbara, who is six years older than I am, remembers what happened. She said Dad was so angry that he frightened her. He insisted the man describe exactly where he had been when he shot the bear. By the time the two had dressed and skinned it, hoisting the carcass on the large wooden swing set Dad had built in our backyard, it was late into the night. The man offered him half the meat but Dad wanted



SHAWN KIRTON

nothing to do with it, and made him take it away.

Early the next morning, Dad took his rifle and shells and drove into the mountains to search for the cubs. Barbara remembers he returned home after dark, tired and sad. She knew if he had found the cubs, he meant to kill them out of mercy, and his not finding them meant they would die slowly of starvation. He had barely survived almost four years as a prisoner of war in Japan, and couldn't abide the thought of any creature dying of hunger.

Painful as it is for me to think about, I am glad my father was the kind of man who would attempt such a task, something others might turn away from, because it wouldn't be pretty, or simple, or, had he found the cubs, an easy thing for him to do. ■



COURTESY OF KARLENE BAYOK EDWARDS

FAR ABOVE: An Idaho bear.

ABOVE: Joe Bayok and his 1955 pickup.





# FERAL CAT FIASCO





# LOVABLE UNTIL THEY'RE NOT

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KHALIELA WRIGHT

I'm a cat person. In college, I acquired a persnickety part-Siamese, which I dubbed Stinky. He was my companion for nineteen years, making him my longest relationship. He was born before either of my kids and outlasted both boyfriends and the ex-husband.

During Stinky's old age, I planted a couple of varieties of catnip in the garden (for medicinal purposes only, mind you). Because of this, I was used to seeing neighbor cats in the yard. Fortunately, Stinky didn't mind sharing his weed, although the neighbor cats often got the munchies and emptied his food before departing. When he died, I pulled up the catnip in an attempt to keep neighbor cats out of the yard. It didn't do much good. Not only is catnip hard to eradicate, but word had gotten out that his patch of weed was unguarded. My yard became the free space in a game of kitty-territory-bingo.

The winner was a watermelon-shaped, timid tabby. Any cat that fat had to be well loved, I figured. But one afternoon when I found her sunning herself on my deck, the watermelon shape was gone, replaced by a lean, lank, half-starved look. She hadn't been fat, she had been pregnant. Several weeks later, she brought her babies for a visit. I watched

with bated breath as they attacked each other in my raised beds and tormented the quail. As the weeks passed, my thoughts turned to the tabby's owner, who needed to find homes for those kittens.

By the time the leaves began giving off golden hues, the tabby and her kittens had become a permanent fixture in my yard, and I realized she was a stray. I called my local branch of the humane society, but was told the shelter didn't accept strays. This left me wondering just what the animal shelter was for, but I figured Mother Nature would soon solve the problem. Winters can be harsh and the coyotes cunning on the Palouse, yet they both failed at their task, as did the hawks and owls.

That which doesn't kill us makes us stronger and, in Mama Cat's case, more prolific. Mating has always been a good way to stave off the cold. Her familiar watermelon shape returned in February and the next litter was born in March. By April, a kitten from the previous litter was watermelon-shaped as well. In less than a year, one stray had become ten. Watching a passel of kittens attack dandelion fluff, I decided there was no way I was going to become "The Cat Lady of Potlatch."

In May, one of the kittens got within striking distance. I

struck. It struck back, shredding my hand. Seeing her baby in danger, Mama Cat started at my knees, clawed her way up my body, and flayed my ear, at which point I decided she could have her baby back. Then I went to the shelter, desperate for help. After a good deal of pleading, management agreed to take the kittens, but under no circumstances would they take adults.

"There is absolutely nothing in the county code that references stray or feral cats and the county doesn't provide any funding," shelter director Tara Wimer told me. "Besides, feral cats are dangerous. We don't have the funds to cover emergency room visits for staff who need stitches."

In exchange for a two hundred dollar check, I got two live traps and prepared to deliver the huddled masses unto them. Before leaving, shelter staff impressed upon me that it was inhumane to deliver the kittens in the trap.

"How am I supposed to get them out?" I asked.

The girl at the counter showed me how to open the trap.

"Not helpful," I said. "If I put my hand in there to separate a kitten from its mother, there will be an explosion of spit, fire, and fur. I'll be lucky if I get my

TOP LEFT: A feral cat in the author's yard.

TOP RIGHT: Benjamin Bad Kitten.

BOTTOM LEFT: Stink and Grumbles face off.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Cats in and on a cage.

hand back.”

She recommended welding gloves. But after my previous encounter with Mama Cat, I had visions of losing more than just my hand.

For the adult cats, the shelter recommended getting them spayed or neutered. I was handed an application for the Spay and Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides funds to defray the cost. They suggested taking the completed application directly to the Animal Hospital Veterinary Clinic, because those veterinarians are SNAP board members, but the clinic said SNAP funds could not be used for stray or feral animals.

I stopped by another vet clinic to enquire about costs, but when the receptionist handed me a quote of \$395.41 per cat for spaying and \$315.76 per cat for neutering, I almost fainted.

Yet another vet quoted \$101 for a spay and said that with a SNAP voucher, the surgeries would be free. Unfortunately, SNAP rules state that no coupons will be issued for use at any non-profit/low-cost spay or neuter clinics.

I headed home with my traps. The problem was, I needed a plan for every cat I was likely to catch, and spending \$101 per cat wasn't feasible. If I repeatedly caught and released the adults while attempting to



round up the kittens, the adults would get wise to the traps and become untrappable.

An article from the *Journal of Ecology and Society* states that contrary to advocates' claims, trapping and spaying is the most expensive method of managing feral cats. (In comparison, euthanasia costs about fifty dollars.) In areas where shelters turn away strays, even People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) recommends euthanasia for feral cats. PETA believes that euthanasia, performed properly, is more compassionate than allowing stray cats to keep reproducing, spread disease, and eventually meet agonizing ends.

Tara Wimer told me she needed help developing a system

to connect people wanting to rid themselves of cats with those looking for barn cats, and wanted me to volunteer. But I knew such a system was already in place at the low-cost vet, and nearly everyone on its list claimed to have gotten same-day service. The only person who didn't make that claim was a man named Clint.

"I had two real nice barn cats," he told me. "They even let the kids pet them. Then a big, mean, stray showed up and run ours off. I didn't mind at first. As long as the mice got eaten, I didn't care who did it. Then this cat took to killing my chickens, so I shot it. I called the vet and had her put my name on the list, but when I got home from work, our cats had come back. Sorry, I

ABOVE: A feral beauty.



can't help you."

A friend of mine, Guy Spencer, connected me with Gary, a farmer in need of a barn cat. We exchanged phone numbers and he said he'd prefer the big burly tom cat who had begun to frequent my yard, and who had managed to tree the neighbor's dog. We figured if a cat could tree a dog, it stood a decent chance of outwitting Wile E. Coyote and his kin. But before I caught the cat, I received a disappointing phone call.

"I'm not going to need that tom after all," Gary said. "When I got home tonight, there was a box of kittens on the porch and a note that read, 'I heard you were looking for cats.'"

"A box of cats?" I said, disheartened.

"That's right. I don't know who done it, but now I got more cats than I need. Good luck getting rid of yours."

I contacted the Latah County Board of Commissioners, but my own frustration was reflected in the commissioners' faces: trouble with feral cats was a county-wide problem. A feral cat colony six hundred strong was living in a trailer court and in the junkyard adjacent to it. The shelter refused to accept animals from that area, because the cats were known to be infected with feline panleukopenia virus (FPV).

The virus attacks cats' intestines, resulting in internal hemorrhaging and death. FPV is spread through contact with fleas and infected animals' body fluids and feces. It's highly contagious and can be carried on shoes, so that even indoor cats are susceptible. What's more, FPV can survive for more than a year in the environment.

After trapping my first kitten, I called the shelter, eager to drop him off.

"Is he tame?" the woman asked.

"No, he's spit, fire, and fury," I said.

"We can't accept kittens unless they are litter box trained and tame enough to handle," she said. "Just keep him in your bathroom until he gentles down."

After my boyfriend, Bruce Pemberton, made his first foray into the bathroom, he returned with puppy dog eyes, insisting he would pay for the cat food if I kept the little tom.

"No," I told him.

"But he's cute. I bet you've already named him, haven't you?" Bruce said.

I leveled a cold stare at Bruce. "I named him Benjamin."

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# IDAHO magazine

Benjamin Bad Kitten is the name of a cat owned by a gardening columnist for the local newspaper, and Bruce hates the column, which he believes should focus solely on plants.

"Why on earth would you name him that?" he asked, stricken.

"Because he's a bad kitten."

"You hate me, don't you?" he replied.

Well, all is fair when it comes to love, war, and feral cats.

I managed to trap the tom's siblings and they joined him in the john, cowering under the toilet every time I opened the door. But, as predicted, they grew bolder. Soon, using the bathroom was a violent and bloody experience. The little tom would leap from behind the toilet, swat my bottom, and then dive for the cover of my pants. Once inside my pant legs, he resumed his attack from under the cover of my panties. My hands and thighs were routinely shredded as I pulled the hissing kitty out of my undies and tossed him in the tub.

After three weeks in the bathroom, the kittens were tame-ish and had mastered the litter box. I called the shelter, hoping to rid myself of the set.

"Make sure to bring a check with you," the woman said. "You'll have to pay the surrender fee."

The surrender fee was



thirty-five dollars per animal (a total of \$105 for the three of them.) "And you need to bring proof of vaccination."

"What?" I stammered.

"We can't accept an animal that isn't current on its vaccinations," she said. "Once they have their shots, we can take them."

I got a couple of quotes on vaccinations: \$106.75 and \$92 per cat. Using the cheaper vet, the grand total for vaccinations and the surrender fee would be \$381. I responded to this in two ways. First, I opened the bathroom door and gave the kittens the run of the house, so I could pee in peace. Next, I called the county commission again.

"You live inside the City of Potlatch, not in the county," I

was told. "You need to take this up with your mayor."

"He says we don't have any funds for animal control," I replied. "He thought that was what the shelter was for. When I said they wouldn't take them, he suggested I chase all the cats across the street, because then they're the county's problem."

In early summer, I was granted an audience with the Latah County Commissioners, which made the front page of the paper. The commissioners said they had to accept public comment before the budget or how the county handled feral cats could be changed. I think they were skittish about the topic, because some students at the University of Idaho had sneaked kittens into their rooms

ABOVE: Trapped and fed.



and then abandoned them at the end of the semester, and the university had ordered that feral cats be trapped and euthanized, which drew protests. And then the hate mail started pouring in to me. People from Utah, Nevada, and California deemed themselves better-qualified than I was to make decisions about the animal life residing in my backyard. A good many believed a feral cat colony should be established and maintained on my property. Well, I thought, if they want to maintain a feral cat colony, let them do it at their house.

"Mama Cat could pop again any day," I lamented to Bruce. "I don't want another litter on the property."

"She can't be due that soon," he said. "The others were just weaned."

"I caught them in May. It's July and she's been pregnant enough for me to tell for a few weeks already. She's due any day."

"What's the gestation period for a cat?"

"Sixty-two days."

"I tell you what," he said. "You trap her and I'll release her somewhere where she'll be more likely to come into contact with coyotes. That way she'll be out of your yard."

Mama Cat went for a drive with Bruce.

I started calling animal

shelters in the surrounding counties to see how they handled feral cats and if it were possible for me to take advantages of their services.

I discovered that each year Latah County provides its shelter with twenty thousand dollars and the City of Moscow adds \$49,505. In comparison, the Benewah County Commissioners give their shelter \$250 per month, and the City of St. Maries provides no direct funding, but waives the water and sewer bill. Its shelter runs a thrift shop to provide operational funds, as does the shelter in Bonner County. The Benewah Humane Society contracts with Washington State University School of Veterinary Medicine to spay and neuter feral cats free of charge to county residents. Volunteers drive the cats to the college, where vet students have a week to practice on them before they're returned. The Benewah Humane Society Director said WSU was grateful to have access to the county's feral cats for teaching purposes, but the program was available only to Benewah County residents. The Kootenai Humane Society receives no government funding, paying for all its programs through donations, grants, and income from the services provided. Fortunately, the Kootenai Humane Society was

willing to help me.

On July 11, after the kittens had been living for weeks in my house, I drove them to the animal shelter in Hayden, where they provide a spay/neuter and rabies shot, all for fifteen dollars per cat. And they collaborate with counties in need, such as Shoshone County, which has a Cat Wrangler program through which volunteers capture feral cats and deliver them to the Kootenai Humane Society to be spayed and neutered.

The shelter staff completed the surgeries on my cats before those of other people, so I wouldn't be stuck in Coeur d'Alene all day. When I picked up the kittens, they were groggy, swaying on their feet like drunken sailors. I was instructed to keep them in the house for another day to recover before letting them out to meet their fates. Unfortunately, after so long in captivity, they had developed Stockholm Syndrome. They had their freedom, but preferred being inside the house.

It's been a year since Mama Cat first wandered into my yard. Of the ten feral cats that frequented my place in May, four remain: the three kittens that were spayed or neutered, and a tom too smart to be trapped. Maybe I should consider myself Latah County's first cat wrangler. ■

# Don't Give Up the Fight You Can Never Tell Who Might Join In

BY STEVE CARR

**T**he recent municipal elections were once again a revelation to me of just how much intestinal fortitude one must have to run for office.

In Idaho Falls, we added an extra battle to the campaign this year with a runoff in December after no candidate secured fifty percent of the November vote. The two left standing were shoved back into the arena. The petty and not so petty mudslinging, the guilt-by-association accusations must be difficult for candidates to stomach (not to mention voters), but surely that pales compared to the fist-in-the-gut feeling one must experience when the electorate selects the other person. I wouldn't know for sure, having never summoned the guts to enter a race.

It isn't easy to charge into the fray—any fray. For example, just last week I paced about the office wondering aloud how I might best encourage another busy acquaintance to join a local non-profit board.

"Ask her," said my beleaguered colleague.

"What if she says no?"

I didn't want to put her in a spot. More important, I wasn't willing to feel the sting of rejection. So, I simply let it go.

Ahhhhhhh.

A lifetime ago, my entire high school class knew I was considering asking our prettiest classmate to the freshman prom. Although my reconnaissance was solid, I couldn't execute. My fingers slipped a half-dozen times from the phone dial—and then I got through, and heard a lilting, "Hello, is someone there?"

I managed to ask if she'd consider joining me—and a few others—for a ride in my mother's station wagon to the prom. In my flustered state, I failed to tell her who I was—but she knew. I know (and knew then) that the advance team I'd sent on reconnaissance wasn't the most discreet.

At the dance, I was painfully awkward, uttering fewer than a dozen words all night and barely managing a slight bow of goodbye at her door. I suspect my date wouldn't rate our evening as one of her most memorable, if she remembered it at all. For me, it meant at least I could rightfully tell myself I was the prom queen's date that night (even though we didn't speak again for two years).

In college, I watched for weeks the comings and goings of the most delightful girl at the university. She lived across the street and high above the kitchen window where I ate my ten-for-a-buck ramen noodles. She was vivacious and kind to the numerous suitors who scaled the flight of stairs to

her door. Her laugh echoed across the campus quad.

I pined for a spot in that rotation of clambering suitors. I pictured myself, saber in hand, fighting my way through the horde. In the end, my sally took the form of a fretful yet well-rehearsed phone call.

"Hello. A bunch of us are planning a picnic. WE'D like to know if you'd join US?"

If she wasn't interested, it wouldn't be me she was rejecting. If she said yes, the "yes" would be all mine.

"Yes," it was.

Throughout the following year and beyond, I danced around any question that carried the possibility of anything less than an enthusiastic affirmation from her, let alone a rejection. Only after I had gathered enough intelligence to know that she'd say "yes" to the ring was a modest proposal made. More than thirty years later, I sometimes try to tell myself that I fearlessly vanquished all adversaries. Of course I know better. I didn't exactly charge into battle. But I didn't desert the field, either.

All of which is to say it takes guts to enter a political race. You who do it are heroes. Don't go away, keep up the fight. To me, the message you send is, "A bunch of us are planning a bright future. WE'D like to know if you'd join US." ■

*Look for Steve on the sidelines or at [scarr@prodigy.net](mailto:scarr@prodigy.net)*



# SAVE OUR STORIES

*IDAHO* magazine is the award-winning monthly magazine that's been telling your stories in the words and photos of hundreds of your fellow Idahoans since October 2001.

Now we're working on getting them on the Internet to share with Idaho students, teachers and the rest of the world. Become a part of our history project. Donations of \$25 or more can be counted toward the project.

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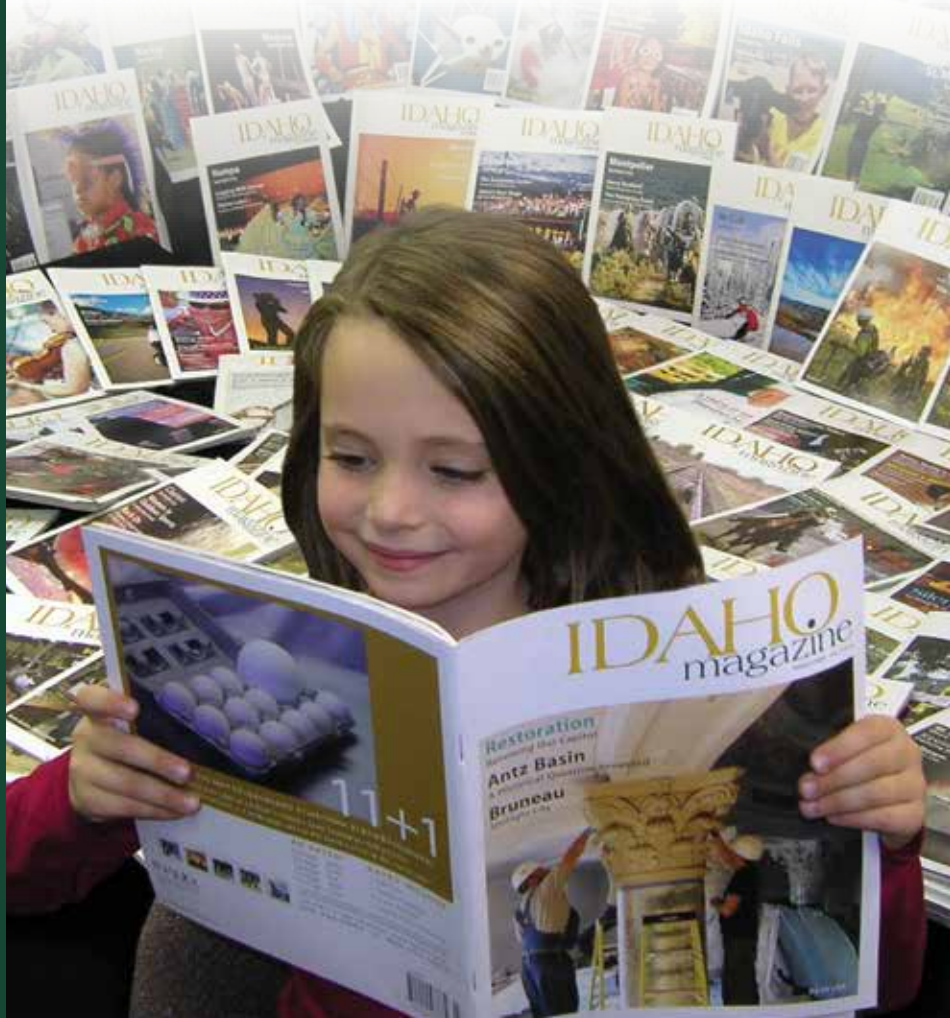
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1 ISSUE	\$3,500
2 ISSUES	\$2,800/ISSUE
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As a full "Title" sponsor you can fill the first two pages of the issue with your own story, your town's story, your business, or to memorialize a loved one. Once online, the sponsored issue can be read, downloaded, printed out or linked to your website — and it's permanent! This price is less than one cent per student currently enrolled in Idaho's schools. Amortize it over future years, and you've made the best bargain since Seward bought Alaska for two cents an acre.

## INVEST IN IDAHO



## Asian Lettuce Wraps

### INGREDIENTS

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts  
2 Tbs oil  
1/4 cup chopped yellow onion  
2 cloves garlic, chopped  
2 Tbs soy sauce  
1/2 cup teriyaki sauce  
2 Tbs sweet red chili sauce  
2 Tbs toasted sesame seeds  
1/4 green onion, chopped  
2 heads of romaine lettuce

### PREPARATION

> Poach (boil) the chicken breasts for 20 minutes. Dice chicken and set aside. Sauté yellow onion and garlic in oil for 3 to 4 minutes then add diced chicken. Add soy sauce, teriyaki sauce, and sweet red chili sauce and simmer for 10 minutes on medium heat.

> Rinse romaine lettuce and cut into large wedges. Add sesame seeds and green onions to mix and serve in bowl with a side of noodles or crunchy chow mein noodles that can be added when building wraps.

Note: Both recipes on these pages are extracted from my 2015 book, *Appetite for Idaho*.



*Amy Larson is a food and adventure writer, artist and art instructor. She makes her way through the state looking for good recipes and new friends, often found simultaneously. She also inspires beginner and dormant artists from one end of Idaho to the other to pick up the paint brush and play.*





## Pork Chop Chili

### INGREDIENTS

2 lbs of center-cut pork chops  
1/4 cup chili powder  
2 medium onions  
3 oz garlic  
1 can tomato sauce (29 oz)  
4 medium red potatoes  
2 cans of peas  
1 cup salsa  
1 tsp black pepper  
1 tsp white pepper  
1 tsp celery salt  
1/2 tsp cumin

### PREPARATION

> Dice meat into bite-sized chunks; dice onions and potatoes. Mix those ingredients with the seasonings and sauté until meat is tender and potatoes are cooked. Then add tomato sauce and salsa. Simmer for 30 minutes. Drain canned peas and add them in. Simmer for 5 minutes. Let dish rest for 15 minutes and serve.



KEVIN JARRETT

## 1

### POKY POLAR PLUNGE, Pocatello

Think you can brave the freezing water for a good cause? Then take the annual Poky Polar Plunge Challenge. Meet at the beach area at the Wellness Complex in Pocatello at 12pm. Warm up activities at 12:30 PM. Plunge at 1:00 PM. Wear anything beach wear, costume or tutus. Music by DJ Gonzo. FREE to plunge, but monetary donations accepted, with proceeds going to benefit a local charity. All Ages welcome. Bring the whole family. Portneuf Wellness Complex, 10588 Fairground Dr, Pocatello.

Information: [jamiép@bannockcounty.us](mailto:jamiép@bannockcounty.us);  
or (208) 237.1340



IDAHO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

## 2-14

### “BISON” EXHIBIT, Pocatello

BISON is a traveling exhibit exploring the past, present, and future of this great North American mammal. The exhibit, which appears at the Idaho Museum of Natural History, creates an interactive environment that combines history, artifacts and hands-on activities to bring to life the story of this great North American mammal. The exhibit is made possible by the National Buffalo Foundation and the Kauffman Museum, and is available to museums across the US and Canada. It tells the tragic history of this majestic animal, its rescue from near extinction, and the story of people across North America working to preserve the bison as a vibrant part of our future. The IMNH is located on the campus of Idaho State University, and is open six days a week (closed Mondays). Check the Web site below for hours and admission prices.

Information: [imnh.isu.edu](http://imnh.isu.edu);  
or (208) 282.3168



BOISE VALLEY FLY FISHERS

## 12-13

### WESTERN IDAHO FLY FISHING EXPO, Garden City

Okay, it's now in the middle of winter and time to get your mind off the cold and snow and onto more interesting things. Like fishing. This is the 14th annual occurrence of this show, which is now a two-day event with a larger exhibit hall and more to see, do, and fish for than ever before. For example, there will be indoors Spey casting plus traditional casting ponds, a unique Fly Tying Theater, and over 40 active tyers. More than 80 exhibitors will be showing their wares, and on Friday night there'll be a social hour with a live band to enhance the show. The Expo will take place at Expo Idaho, with hours Noon to 9:00 PM on Friday, and 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturday. Admission is \$7.00, with children ages 13 and under, free.

Information: [BVFFExpo.com](http://BVFFExpo.com);  
or [ExpoChair@BVFF.com](mailto:ExpoChair@BVFF.com); or (208) 440.1196





JESSICA LOGAN



MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE



MCCALL WINTER CARNIVAL

## 26

### BAKED POTATO BAR, Coeur d'Alene

This is a traditional Idaho Baked Potato dinner—and the only bar in town that offers dessert! You get a baked potato that you can load with all the trimmings (chili, cheese sauce, bacon, broccoli, sauteed mushrooms—and more), plus a side salad and desert. It's a monthly fundraiser for CdA's Lake City Center, a charitable organization which provides a focal point for serving the social, nutritional, and educational needs of citizens aged 60 years and above. Daytime services include classes and activities, a game room, lunch service, Meals on Wheels delivery, and Bingo. Sponsors contribute the dessert and side salad, and a local grocer provides the potatoes, and the local Lion's Club of Coeur d'Alene runs the event. Bring your family and friends. Place: Lake City Center; Time: 5:00 PM; Costs: \$4 for children under 8 and \$6 for all others.

Information: [lakecitycenter.org](http://lakecitycenter.org);  
or (208) 667.4628

## 26-27

### MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE, Caldwell

MCT's production "Beauty Lou and the Country Beast" is an original country western adaptation of the classic fairy tale. Due to high demand, there will be two performance weekends this year. As always, local children can audition for parts. Auditions for the January performances will take place on Monday, January 22; auditions for the February performances take place on Monday, January 29. The performances of "Beauty Lou and the Country Beast" will take place in Jewett Auditorium on the campus of The College of Idaho. Times: January 26, 7:00 pm; January 27, 1:00 pm. And Friday, February 2, 7:00 pm; Saturday, February 3, 1:00 pm. There will be a special session at 1:00 pm on February 2 for patrons with special needs. Ticket prices: Adult: \$6, \$8, \$10; Child: \$4, \$6, \$8 Child.

Information: [caldwellfinearts.org](http://caldwellfinearts.org);  
or (208) 459.5783

## 26-2/4

### WINTER CARNIVAL, McCall

Tired of winter in the valley or wherever else you might be? Then here's the place for you. Come on up—or down (or sideways)—and enjoy the famous snow sculptures, the Torchlight and Mardi Gras Parades, and live music, plus daily events spanning everything from comedy shows to art auctions, snow-bike races to the Monster Dog Pull, and much, much, more. The theme for this year's Carnival is "There's 'Snow' Place Like Home". This iconic Idaho event, described as a celebration of all things winter, was inspired by the Payette Lake Winter Games, first held in 1924 when a train from Boise brought 248 visitors to McCall. The official Winter Carnival started in the 1960s, and over the years, it has grown into an event bringing more than 60,000 people to McCall each year!

Information: [mccallchamber.org/winter-carnival](http://mccallchamber.org/winter-carnival)

# JANUARY 2018

**DEAR READERS:** In spite of our efforts to ascertain that events listed in our calendar are described accurately, cancellations or changes due to weather, illness of performers, and other such things, although rare, are bound to occur. Double checking with the event coordinators about locations, dates and times is always a good idea. Details about many of the following events can be found at [idahocalendar.com](http://idahocalendar.com)

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| <p>1 New Year's Day</p> <p>1 Polar Bear Plunge Cd'A-Reason for Freeze:<br/>Come join the good people of Coeur d' Alene to do the Polar Bear Plunge on Sanders Beach. This year let's Freeze for a Reason! Please bring donations that "A Reason for Freeze" will collect and donate on your behalf to St. Vincent dePaul of North Idaho! Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>1 Poky Polar Plunge: Meet at the beach area at the Wellness Complex in Pocatello at 12pm. Warm up activities at 12:30pm. Plunge at 1pm. Music by DJ Gonzo. FREE to plunge. Monetary donations accepted, proceeds to benefit a local charity. Portneuf Wellness Complex, Pocatello</p> <p>2 Kilroy Coffee Klatch: 10:00-12:00 at Nampa's Warhawk Air Museum; FREE for ALL veterans and ALL veterans are welcome; Coffee and breakfast treats are served at no charge.; No RSVP required - just show up; Nampa</p> <p>2 Project Linus: We are a local group that makes blankets and quilts for children in crisis in the Pocatello area. 1:00-4:00PM, First Presbyterian Church, Pocatello</p> <p>2 Senior Day: Free admission for seniors (65+) to the Art Museum of Eastern Idaho, Idaho Falls</p> <p>2-5 Winter Break Drop In: Come out to the BoiseWaterShed from 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. during Winter Break to enjoy fun activities and crafts. In addition to the hands-on fun of the exhibit hall, special winter and snow-themed activities and crafts will take place. Free. No registration is required. BoiseWaterShed Environmental Education Center, Boise Water Renewal Facility, 11818 W. Joplin Road, Boise</p> <p>2-14 "Bison": Exhibit, Idaho Museum of Natural History, Pocatello</p> <p>3 Toddler Wednesday: Come make art together! Children ages 2-3 with an adult are invited to explore art media related to Boise Art Museum's exhibitions. Dress for mess! Bring a container if you would like something in which to carry home your artwork. Free with the price of admission. BAM Members FREE; Boise</p> <p>3 Idaho Job &amp; Career Fair: Check out the jobs at the FREE Idaho Job &amp; Career Fair, 9am-4pm at the Riverside Hotel, Boise</p> <p>3 Boise Birding Series: "Who's Here Now?" In addition to the birds on our feeders, what other birds are wintering in Idaho and where can you</p> | <p>see them? 9:00-10:00 AM, Jim Hall Foothills Learning Center, 3188 Sunset Peak Rd, Boise</p> <p>3-31 Happier Hour Story Time: WEDNESDAYS; 4:00-5:00PM, Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>3-31 Parent Play Date: WEDNESDAYS; Special art classes for parents to do with their 4- or 5-year-old children; 11:00 AM-12:00 Noon, ARTitorium, Idaho Falls</p> <p>3-31 After School Fun: WEDNESDAYS; For ages 6-11; Crafts, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), building with LEGOs and other creative projects. Free. 4:30 PM, Public Library, Caldwell</p> <p>3,5,10 Story Hours: Books and crafts designated for children ages of 2- 4 will be available during story time. All ages are welcome. 10:30AM-12:30PM, Hailey</p> <p>4 Four County Art Guild; 12:00-1:00 PM, Public Library, Weiser</p> <p>4 Well-Read Evening Book Club, 6:00-7:30PM at the Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>4 First Thursday at the Boise Art Museum: BAM offers extended hours (10:00AM-8:00PM), with special programs including Ask a Docent at Noon and 2 p.m. and Studio Art Exploration and Art Answers from 4 – 7 p.m. Admission by donation; Boise</p> <p>4-25 TNT for Teens: THURSDAYS; Here kids 10 and up meet to play video games. 4-5 PM. Public Library, Hailey</p> <p>5-28 Game Zone: FRIDAYS; The Moscow Public Library presents Game Zone from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. For kids ages 8-17, Moscow</p> <p>6 Ski For Free Day: Season kick-off event at the East Fork Mink Creek Nordic Center! Use our rental equipment at no charge or bring your own to avoid delays. Trail passes are free for the day and volunteer instructors give free mini lessons. We can equip about 80 people at a time, but we have run low on popular sizes in the past. Snowshoes are also available. Pocatello</p> <p>6 Museum Work Day: Volunteers welcome; 8:00AM; Lunchtime Seminar (bring your own lunch): Dr. Paul Castroville, "My Life among the Ice Crawlers" (What's an Ice Crawler? Come to the workday and find out!) ; The O.J.Smith Museum of Natural History, Boone Hall, The College of Idaho, Caldwell</p> <p>6 Swing Junction's Big Band Dance: This is a</p> |
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## FREE CALENDAR LISTINGS

Family-oriented and “affordable” Idaho events get a free line in our calendar, and each month we choose several to highlight. Here’s how to submit:

**DEADLINE:**

The first of each month.

**LEAD TIME:**

Two issues.

**NEXT DEADLINE:**

January 1 for the February issue.

**SEND DETAILS TO:** [calendar@idahomagazine.com](mailto:calendar@idahomagazine.com)

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| <p>community dance held the first Saturday of every month. The 16-piece big band, The Jazz House Big Band, is our house band. We offer an introductory lesson before the dance, no partner is required and beginners are welcome. 8:00 - 11:00 PM, Veteran's Memorial Building, Idaho Falls</p> <p>6 Free Idaho Park'n' Ski Day, Indian Creek State Park, Priest Lake</p> <p>6 Learn to Ski and Snowboard: Free; Pomerelle Ski Area, Albion</p> <p>6 Biscuits and Gravy Breakfast: 8:00-10:30 AM, Senior Center, Weiser</p> <p>6 Weaving Guild Meeting: 11:30 AM, First Congregational Church, Boise</p> <p>6 Eagle Rock Outlaws Fast-Draw Competition: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at the Cowboy Fast Draw Club located at 10648 N. 25th E. in Idaho Falls. We teach gun safety while giving men, women, boys &amp; girls ages 8 and up the chance to find out just how fast they would have been in a gunfight in the late 1800's! The competition is fun and exciting, and free to spectators; Idaho Falls</p> <p>6-27 Teton Valley Winter Farmers Market: SATURDAYS; There will be growers, producers, artisans, and small business owners selling their goods directly to the consumer. 10:00-3:00, Driggs</p> <p>6-27 Community Bingo: SATURDAYS; Ages 18+; Help us fund our nutrition program for seniors confined to their homes; 6:00-8:00 PM, Senior Citizen's Center, Idaho Falls</p> <p>8 Souper Supper: Free meal; 5:30PM, St. Charles Catholic Church, Hailey</p> <p>8-29 Gaming Mondays: MONDAYS, 4:30 PM, Public Library, Caldwell</p> <p>9 Story Trail Adventure: “Owl Moon”. We invite you and your preschooler to join us. We will walk the quarter mile trail and read the story pages posted on our platforms together. Afterwards each child can get creative with our story-related</p> | <p>craft! Children should dress for the weather and be accompanied by an adult. For registration, please visit: <a href="http://parks.cityofboise.org/">http://parks.cityofboise.org/</a> or call (208)608.7680; 10:00-11:00 AM, Foothills Learning Center, Boise</p> <p>10 Well-Read Morning Book Club, 10:00-11:30AM at the Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>10 Gem State High School Honor Band: Outstanding area high school students in the Gem State District (large high schools) will combine their best students for an extraordinary concert of instrumental music. 7:00-8:30 PM, Idaho Falls</p> <p>11-25 Teen Thursdays: THURSDAYS; For grades 6 through 12; Focuses on electronics, technology, some crafts, and a monthly Teen Science Café; Free. 4:00 PM, Public Library, Caldwell</p> <p>12 Faculty Recital: Carol Padgham Albrecht, oboe, and Catherine Anderson, piano. 7:30 – 9pm, Haddock Performance Hall - Lionel Hampton School of Music - University of Idaho, Moscow</p> <p>12-13 Boise Flea Market: You never know what you're going to find at the flea market, but one thing's for certain, something will find you. Bring home a new, old thing to love. Hours: Sat 9am-5pm. Sun 10am-4pm: Admission:\$2, seniors \$1, children 12 and under are free; South Building, Expo Idaho, Garden City</p> <p>12-13 Western Idaho Fly Fishing Expo, Expo Idaho, Garden City</p> <p>13 Boise Contra Dance: 7:00-10:30, Boise</p> <p>13 Community Dance: 6:00-9:00 PM; \$5 per person, finger-food potluck; Music by Just for Kicks; Senior and Community Center, Weiser</p> <p>13 Foothills Family Day: “Over and Under the Snow”-Learn about animals that survive Idaho's winters both above and below the snow;10:00 AM-1:00 PM, Jim Hall Foothills Learning Center, 3188 Sunset Peak Rd, Boise</p> <p>13-14 48th Snowshoe Softball Tournament, Priest Lake</p> <p>15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</p> |
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- 16.17,18 Idaho Bach Festival Concerts: 7:30 PM, Haddock Performance Hall - Lionel Hampton School of Music - University of Idaho, Moscow
- 16-18 Eastern Idaho Agricultural Show: The expo features latest in farm equipment, products and services, demonstrations, exhibits and Ag technologies. Hours: Tue-Wed 9am-5pm, Thu 9am-1pm. Holt Arena, ISU Campus, Pocatello
- 17 Painting and Pizza, a Mother/Daughter night: Hands to Art, Coeur d'Alene
- 18 Little Learners: Learn about a different topic each month through fun crafts, games, songs, and snacks in this class for parents and toddlers (ages 2-4). 1:00-11:00 AM, Museum of Idaho, Idaho Falls
- 18 Home School Day: For children in grades Pre-K to 6 th grade. We make science come alive and connect your students to the natural world! Three sessions, all at the same hour ( 10:00 -11:30 AM). \$3 per child for any one session. Pre-K- K Story Trail: "Owl Moon"; 1st - 3rd: "Winter Animal Tracking"; 4th and up: "Winter Migrations". Foothills Learning Center, Boise
- 18 Creative Writing for Teens: For youth in grades 7-12; We write short stories, poetry, mysteries, and more. Your imagination is the limit. 7:00-8:30 PM, Public Library, Idaho Falls
- 18 Tour of Hulls Gulch Ravine: The Foothills Learning Center and Idaho Conservation League team up to offer this short hike, one of eleven hiking "tours" of city-owned foothills reserves. Come hike with us and learn about these treasures! 5:30 - 6:30 PM. All hikes are no more than 3 miles, free, and family friendly. Pre-registration required! Please call Lana Weber at (208)345.6933, X16.
- 18-20 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Sandpoint
- 18-20 "The Diary of Anne Frank": Tickets: \$10; 7:30 p.m. at the CSI Fine Arts Theater, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls
- 18-21 Idaho Laugh Festival 2018, Boise
- 18-21 36th Annual RV Super Show: Expo Idaho, Garden City
- 19 "Art of Building a Community": Designed for artisans to display and sell their pieces in a climate controlled environment --- 72 degrees and sunny every day without wind! It is FREE to set up a 10x10 booth. Art! Food! Fun for Everyone! 5:00 to 8:00 pm, Karcher Mall, Nampa
- 19-20 Wiseguys Comedy Headliners: 7:30 PM, Historic Wilson Theatre, Rupert
- 20 WISCL Chess Tournament, Lowell Scott Middle School, Meridian
- 20 Pancake Breakfast: 8:30-10:00 AM; \$6.00; Gem State will be playing; Senior Center, Weiser
- 20 Meet a Scientist/Discovery Day: 1:00--Learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) topics from scientists working in our own community; 2:00--Kids ages 6-12, stick around and enjoy even more fun activities on the same topic. Pre-registration required. The Museum of Idaho, Idaho Falls
- 23-24 Western Idaho Ag Expo: The expo features latest in farm equipment, products and services, demonstrations, exhibits and Ag technologies. Hours: Tues 9am-6pm; Wed 9am-4pm, Events Center, Caldwell
- 23-26 Safety Fest of the Great Northwest, Boise
- 24 IFPL Book Club: The book club is open to the public and meets at 7:00pm on the top floor of the Public Library, Idaho Falls
- 25 Auditorium Chamber Music Series: Ying String Quartet. 7:30 - 9:30pm, Auditorium - Administration Building, University of Idaho, Moscow
- 25 Teen Science Café--"Quantum Cats": For grades 6 through 12. Free. Quantum physics is the study of sub-atomic particles and how they behave. Sound small? You bet it is! Boise State University professor, Dr. Paul Simmonds, will help us understand this tiny but extremely important key to the workings of the universe. We'll play a video game, "Quantum Cats," to learn more about how strange, charm, and quark operate. And there's free pizza. 4:00-5:30 PM, Public Library, Caldwell
- 26 Baked Potato Bar Fundraiser: The works! Cheese Sauce, Bacon, Broccoli, Sauteed mushrooms, chives & more -The only bar in town that comes with a side salad & dessert! Bring your friends and family. The potato bar opens at 5:00pm. We call table numbers to go first for some fun! Lake City Center, Coeur d'Alene
- 26-27 Missoula Children's Theatre "Beauty Lou and the Country Beast": Jewett Auditorium, The College of Idaho Campus, Caldwell
- 26-28 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Coeur d'Alene
- 26-31 Winter Carnival, McCall
- 27-28 Idaho Modeling and Design Show, Boise
- 29-31 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Boise
- 30 Wylie and the Wild West: Blackfoot Performing Arts Center, Blackfoot

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| <p>1 Well-Read Evening Book Club, 6:00-7:30PM at the Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>1 Four County Art Guild; 12:00-1:00 PM, Public Library, Weiser</p> <p>1-4 Winter Carnival, McCall</p> <p>2-3 Idaho Scrapbook Show, Expo Idaho, Garden City</p> <p>2-3 Fire &amp; Ice Winterfest: Come, bring the family and celebrate winter with the Portneuf River Polar Bear Float, Running of the Bulls, Kids Water Carnival, Casino Night, Torch Light Parade, Comedy Night, Sub Zero Superhero Endurance Swim and more! Lava Hot Springs</p> <p>2-3 Missoula Children's Theatre "Beauty Lou and the Country Beast": Jewett Auditorium, The College of Idaho Campus, Caldwell</p> <p>3 Swing Junction's Big Band Dance: This is a community dance held the first Saturday of every month. The 16-piece big band, The Jazz House Big Band, is our house band. We offer an introductory lesson before the dance, no partner is required and beginners are welcome. 8:00 - 11:00 PM, Veteran's Memorial Building, Idaho Falls</p> <p>3 Cabin Fever Reliever: This year's program will be filled with educational and instructional activities for everyone, but mostly designed for kids, and kids at heart! 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Free. Karcher Mall, Nampa</p> <p>3 Eagle Rock Outlaws Fast-Draw Competition: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at the Cowboy Fast Draw Club located at 10648 N. 25th E., Idaho Falls.</p> <p>3 Museum Work Day: Volunteers welcome; 8:00AM; Lunchtime Seminar (bring your own lunch): Dr. Luke Daniels, C of I Biology Department, "Fulbright Experience"; The O.J.Smith Museum of Natural History, Boone Hall, The College of Idaho, Caldwell</p> <p>3,10 Community Bingo: Ages 18+; 6:00-8:00 PM, Senior Citizen's Center, Idaho Falls</p> <p>3 Weaving Guild Meeting: 11:30 AM, First Congregational Church, Boise</p> <p>6 Kilroy Coffee Klatch: 10:00-12:00 at Nampa's Warhawk Air Museum; FREE for ALL veterans and ALL veterans are welcome; Coffee and breakfast treats are served at no charge.; No RSVP required - just show up; Nampa</p> <p>6 Senior Day: Free admission for seniors (65+) to the Art Museum of Eastern Idaho, Idaho Falls</p> <p>7 Happier Hour Story Time: 4:00-5:00PM, Well-Read Moose, Coeur d'Alene</p> <p>7 Boise Birding Series: "What is the overall state of birds worldwide?" 9:00-10:00 AM, Jim Hall Foothills Learning Center, 3188 Sunset Peak Rd, Boise</p> <p>7 After School Fun: For ages 6-11; Crafts, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics),</p> | <p>building with LEGOs and other creative projects. Free. 4:30 PM, Public Library, Caldwell</p> <p>7 Parent Play Date: Special art class for parents to do with their 4- or 5-year-old children; 11:00 AM-12:00 Noon, ARTitorium, Idaho Falls</p> <p>8 Teen Thursday: For grades 6 through 12; Focuses on electronics, technology, some crafts, and a monthly Teen Science Café; Free. 4:00 PM, Public Library, Caldwell</p> <p>8-11 Treasure Valley Boat Show: Expo Idaho, Garden City</p> <p>9 Idaho Business and Technology Show, The Riverside Hotel, Boise</p> <p>9,10 World Music Celebration: 7:30 - 9:30pm, Auditorium - Administration Building - Main Campus. Artists TBA. \$8 for adults, \$5 for students and senior citizens, University of Idaho, Moscow</p> <p>9-11 Boise Golf and Travel Show: North Expo, Garden City</p> <p>10 Daddy-Daughter Date Night: Rec Center, Nampa</p> <p>10 Foothills Family Day: "Idaho Explorer Day". Develop your explorer skills by starting a naturalist journal and learning to identify plants. 10:00 AM-1:00 PM, Jim Hall Foothills Learning Center, 3188 Sunset Peak Rd, Boise</p> |
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## JANUARY CONTRIBUTORS



**Kevon Bjornson**

is a graduate of Boise State University with a degree in writing. He grew up the Boise area, offering him the opportunity to explore the beautiful outdoors. He considers nature one of his greatest teachers and a place from which a lot of his writing influence is derived. Visit the group he helped to found, Generation Wild Idaho. at [www.gwildidaho.org](http://www.gwildidaho.org).



**Karlene Bayok Edwards**

grew up in McCall, graduating from McCall Donnelly High School. At the age of eight, realizing there would never be enough books, she began volunteering at the McCall Library, hence her thirty-four-year career as a school librarian. She met her husband in Arizona, where she earned degrees in English literature and library science and where the two ultimately settled. Now retired, she feels compelled to write from the vivid memories of her Idaho childhood and from the Idaho backcountry stories told by her parents, Joe and Marcella Bayok.



**Geraldine Mathias**

put down roots in Idaho forty-eight years ago, a transplant from Oklahoma. A retired English teacher, she now writes, walks for exercise and, from the deck of her cabin, is mesmerized by the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. She is working on novel set in Oklahoma around the turn of the 20th century, and two of her children's books have been published, *Cookies for Frankie* and *The Tale of Strawberry Rose*. Both are available by email: [gkmathias@gmail.com](mailto:gkmathias@gmail.com).



**Mike Medberry**

has served as a senior environmentalist for several local and national conservation organizations. A Boise resident, he holds an MFA from the University of Washington. For more information about his book, *On the Dark Side of the Moon* (Caxton Press, Caldwell, 2012), visit his website, [www.mikemedberry.com](http://www.mikemedberry.com)



**Russell Steele**

lived in Cobalt from 1949-1952 and 1956-1957 with his father Burt, mother Margaret, and brothers Bob and Ron.

He wrote a book about his life, *Cobalt: Legacy of the Blackbird Mine*. Russell and his wife Ellen live in California, where he is a broadband consultant, freelance writer, and blogger.



**Mary Terra-Berns**

is a freelance writer and biologist with a masters degree in fish and wildlife sciences. She has worked with rare species such as wolverines, Canada lynx, red-cockaded woodpeckers, and many not-so-rare species. An Idaho native, Mary enjoys hiking, fly-fishing, running, skiing, snow shoeing, and traveling.



**Mike Turnlund**

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**Madge Cook Wylie**

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