

The IDAHO magazine

June 2005

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IDAHO

magazine

JUNE 2005 VOL. 4, NO. 9

Mary Jane's Farm

It's hip. It's organic.

It's a big success
in the Palouse hills.

Fiction Contest 2005

Adult Winner: "The Boyfriend Test"

Stanley

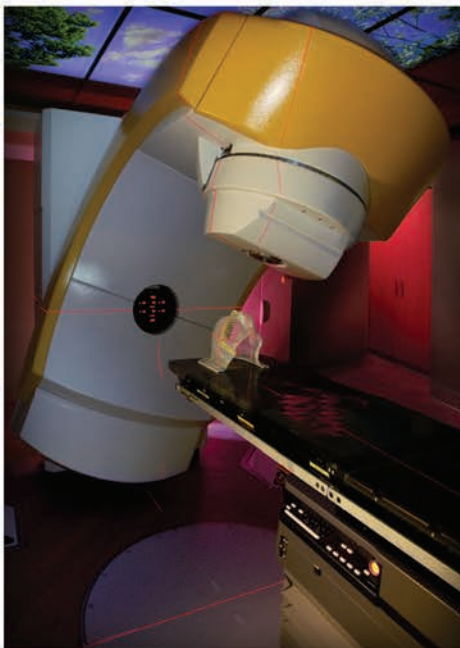
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Mary Jane's Palouse Farm 12

An organic farmer, carpenter, entrepreneur, magazine publisher, photographer, and writer, Mary Jane Butters has reached her prime now, at age 51, after an early career in the U.S. Forest Service. With a major book deal and a thriving business, Mary Jane's success story is growing on a national scale in an unlikely location: the Palouse hills eight miles south of Moscow.

By Carol Price Spurling

Stanley-Spotlight City 32

A splendid view of the majestic Sawtooth and White Clouds mountains awaits those who choose to visit the central Idaho hamlet of Stanley. While they may appreciate photographic versions of similar settings, outdoor recreation seekers jaded by big city office work can find there's nothing like the real thing. It's a visual treat that local residents, such as cattle ranchers, have access to year-round.

By Ryan Peck

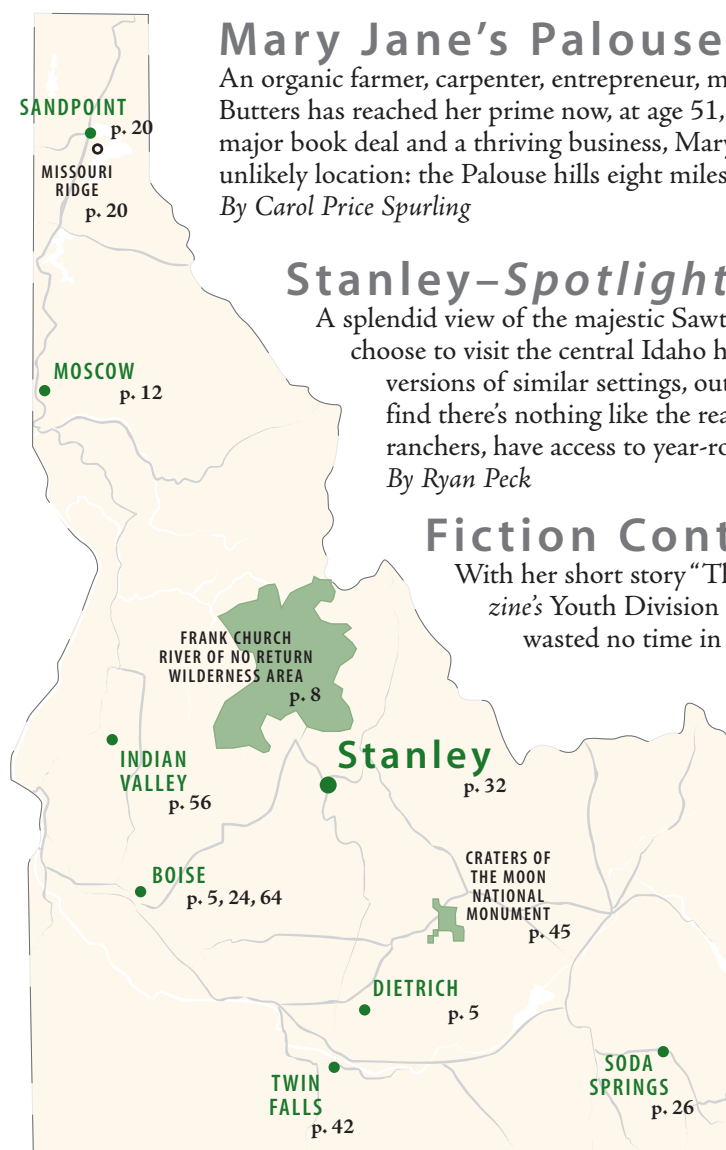
Fiction Contest 2005 50

With her short story "The Wildflower" Ciara R. Huntington was *IDAHO* magazine's Youth Division Fiction Contest winner in 2004. Huntington, a Boise native, wasted no time in making her mark in this year's Adult Division competition.

Huntington's humorous entry, "The Boyfriend Test," took top honors in the ever-competitive adult category. It's a good read.

By Ciara R. Huntington

With Ciara R. Huntington's story "The Boyfriend Test" this month's issue kicks off the summer publication of the winning entries in *IDAHO* magazine's 2005 Fiction Contest. In a photo-finish decision over Lydia Barbee's short story "A Quiet Mind," Huntington took top honors with her story in the adult division. In the next few months, watch for the winners of the Junior and Senior High Youth Divisions, and the Professional Division.



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cover photo:

Pictured: Mary Jane Butters, an organic farmer and author with a nationally-distributed book, at her farm in the Palouse hills south of Moscow.

Photograph title: "Mary Jane Butters"

Photographer: Rajah Bose


opposite page photo:

Pictured: An angler who identified himself only as "Red" tries for a catch near the central Idaho town of Stanley.

Photographer: Paul Frantellizzi

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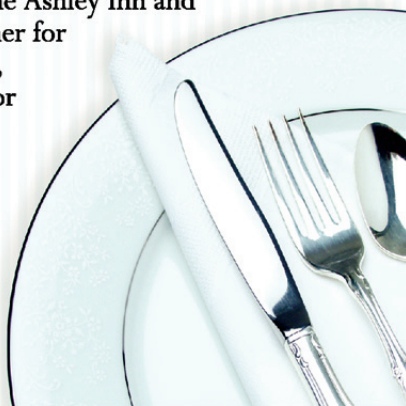
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Dietrich Native Dan Costello

Teaching, gigging—just playing music for the love of it

By Ryan Peck



PHOTO BY LINDSEY COREY

If you were to whistle him a melody, Dan Costello could instantly play the melody back for you on his guitar. But it's not just his technical prowess that makes Costello such a great Idaho musician—it's his love for music. It's a love he discovered during his childhood in the Magic Valley.

Born in 1975, Costello turned on to music when he was five years old. He spent the first eight years of his life in the out-of-the-way town of Dietrich, where his dad worked for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Living in such a small town did not afford the young Costello the luxury of being surrounded by lots of friends his age. Costello filled this void by exploring the corners and closets of the large farmhouse where he lived. One of his first finds was a baritone ukulele.

By the time his parents realized his discovery, kid Costello had figured out how to play chords on it. Costello then began searching the farmhouse for other ways to make music. He found harmonicas, horns, and an old Spanish guitar, albeit a guitar he could not play. "Mom had a guitar, but the strings stood way off the fret-board," he told me. "My little hands couldn't physically play it!" At age 13, as a junior high school band member in Burley, Costello finally began playing the guitar—his instrument of choice. Costello attributes his success in music largely to the Idaho public school system. The music programs at Idaho public schools enabled Costello to be exposed to every instrument he could dream of. He became a vocalist with the aid of Idaho's choir teachers. "Idaho schools have always been so great about supporting music and the arts,"

Dan Costello in a moment of repose with his favorite guitar.

Costello says. “Students that would have otherwise not been able to play music have been able to because of public schools.” Costello’s parents also strongly encouraged his music interest, right from the start. Costello even builds specialized, wooden hand drums, called cajons, with his father.

In 1993, Costello began attending Boise State University as a music performance major. When not in class, Costello would frequently find warm patches of campus grass to lounge on for solitary practice sessions or jams with friends. On a fall day in 1994, he was jamming on

increased its emphasis on gigging, playing, as Costello said, “nearly every stage in Boise.” In 2002, Stella released a self-titled CD. Earlier this year, Stella took second place in the “Northwest Quest for the Best” event, and plans to release a new CD during the summer.

In addition to Stella, Costello started another band with bassist Hill called Plan B—currently a weekly mainstay at Tom Graine’s Sporting Pub, a downtown Boise club. Plan B gives Costello and Hill a chance to write and explore more pop-oriented music—something that

heard the songs and sound like he has played with your band for years. Artists such as Old Boise Guitar owner Johnny Pisano, singer-songwriter Douglas Cameron, and Boise’s Rebecca Scott all speak of Costello’s amazing talents. But even with all the respect and kudos, Costello doesn’t have a big desire to be adored by the masses. He does it for the love of it. “I don’t need to be an icon,” he says. “I would be just as happy if people would close their eyes and just listen to the music.” His love has also helped him be a teacher, giving lessons out of one of

Costello attributes his success in music largely to the Idaho public school system. The music programs at Idaho public schools enabled Costello to be exposed to every instrument he could dream of . . . “Idaho schools have always been so great about supporting music and the arts,” Costello says.

campus with drummer friend Scott Lindbloom, when a quiet guy walked up and asked if he could play bass with them. The reserved guy turned out to be freshman music performance major and bass player, Rob Hill. “We were a bit nervous of Rob because his socks matched his shirt . . . after we played with him everything was OK,” Costello says with a laugh. Costello, Hill, and Lindbloom soon formed a band called Stella (named after the old jazz and blues favored Stella brand of guitars). The three musicians began writing sophisticated, progressive, acoustic songs that showed off each member’s chops—meaning that everyone got to take solos. After college wound up for Costello in 1998, the trio

doesn’t quite fit in Stella’s repertoire. Says Costello: “Stella remains (our) original music band . . . (Plan B) is for keeping venue owners happy.”

It doesn’t end there. In addition to a burgeoning solo career, Dan also plays backup for Boise’s Einstein’s Itch, Boise’s Big Fuzz Ensemble, and the Mountain Home jazz group that calls itself The B3 Sides. Costello is also a past member of longtime Idaho resident Ned Evett’s group (for additional information on Evett, see the February 2005 issue of *IDAHO magazine*). Among musicians, Dan is known as the guy you can call when you need a guitarist (or backup singer, harmonica player, and so forth) in a pinch. He can show up never having

the Old Boise Guitar studios. “Teaching is something I love,” says Costello. “I am a better teacher now that I have found my own voice and solidified my art.”

Making a living playing music means Costello plays a lot of gigs. Keep your eyes peeled and ears on and you will probably catch Dan doing his thing. And he plans on being around for a while, always calling Idaho home. He says: “You could spin me around the globe and then plop me in Idaho somewhere and I would immediately figure out that I was in Idaho . . . I can’t imagine calling anywhere else home.”

Ryan Peck lives in Boise.

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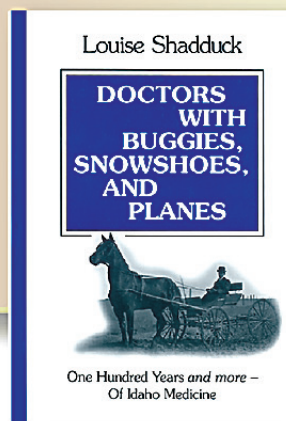
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Backcountry Winging-it

A nerve-wracking flight in central Idaho

Story text by Linda J. Henderson

Photographs by Bud Henderson

OK, now we're going into aircraft carrier mode," our pilot said. I peered through my Plexiglas window and saw nothing but forest and jagged hilltops below.

As he adjusted a wheel in the floor between our seats, he began to recite his landing checklist aloud: "Fuel on both, trim is set, cowl flaps closed, twenty-degree flaps, airspeed eighty knots . . ."

Our craft dropped lower and lower. Lowered to in between two rocky cliffs. Still, our pilot kept us on a steady descent. A jagged ridge on the shoulder of a mountain threatened our right wing tip as we passed by.

Getting nervous, I leaned forward to look over the dash for a better view out front. At last, a small grassy clearing came into view. It didn't look very big, or very smooth, and there were trees at one end; a creek at the other.

"Sit tight," our pilot spoke into my headset. "We're going to buzz it once for moose or elk." My stomach flipped as we dipped lower and skimmed the surface of the clearing below. Sure enough, we interrupted the quiet grazing of a huge cow



RIGHT: An airborne view of the Johnson Creek airstrip, one of the better-maintained and more popular airstrips in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

RIGHT, INSET: The authors' airplane parked at the Chamberlain airstrip. They took a stroll in the woods to look at camp sites.



aviation adventure

moose, which trotted indignantly off into the woods with her head tossed high over her shoulders.

Accelerating, and dipping one wing sharply to the left, we circled and made another approach. "Are you ready?" he called through the headset.

With white knuckles, I nodded, and the first wheels touched the ground. Busy with steering and braking, my crusty old former Marine Corps fighter pilot didn't notice my apprehension. There, the third wheel is down. After a bumpy ride over gopher holes and rocks, our trusty aircraft rolled to a stop just short of the clump of trees at the end of the runway.

"There! Did that scare ya?" J. J. Jones said, grinning as he shut off the engine and pulled off his headset.

I unbuckled my seat harness, and slid out of my seat to the ground. My knees were momentarily a little wobbly, but the thrill of this adventure kept me on my feet.

As soon as I am sure that I am still alive, I am eager to see more.

We have just landed on a tiny airstrip in the bush country of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness—more than 2.4 million acres of undisturbed, wild, and nearly inaccessible land embracing the heart of Idaho. This is bush plane flying at its most exciting. And I suppose to a fellow accustomed to the deck of a pitching and rolling aircraft carrier, it is probably fun, too.

This untouched treasure in the heart of Idaho received the "River of No Return Wilderness" designation from Congress in 1980. Idaho Senator Frank Church was highly instrumental in achieving this designation for Idaho's crown-jewel, and therefore in 1984, just before his death from pancreatic cancer, the public land's title was changed to the "Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness."

This wilderness is as wild as the ride that got us there. By wild, I mean primitive in all of the best ways. Access is limited to foot, horseback, running the river in a boat, or by airplane.

There are no other ways to explore the vast acreages of high mountains and deep canyons in this wilderness. It embraces the old Idaho Primitive Area, and the Salmon River Breaks Primitive Area, in addition to adjacent wild lands, making it the largest contiguous National Forest Wilderness in the Lower Forty-eight.

How is this national treasure best enjoyed?

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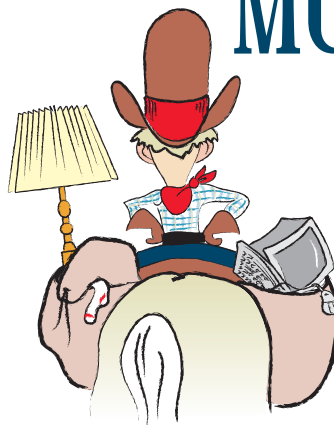
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Strap on a backpack filled with dehydrated meals and sleep gear, and hike to an authentic lookout tower—some available for rent for a solitary adventure on top of the world. At altitudes nearing 10,000 feet, the view is breathtaking.

Harness up a pack string and head out on your favorite trail horse. There are approximately 2,446 miles of trails to explore. Within the wilderness are abandoned mine shacks, unimproved campsites beside the rivers, and entire ghost towns established during the 19th Century gold-rush days. But most trails were built before 1930, and around four hundred miles are in very primitive condition. So it is wise to check current topographical maps, and inquire at the ranger stations before striking out on your own.

Bring your fishing pole and your best lures. Seek out the dozens of crystal-clear alpine lakes, teeming with prize-winning lunkers hungry for your bait. The rivers and lakes support twenty-three species of fish, both indigenous

and anadromous (steelhead and chinook salmon make their way up to the headwaters to spawn). Dolly Varden, rainbow and cutthroat trout abound, and sturgeon lay quietly in deep pools of the river. Getting to the alpine lakes may be challenging, but that's what makes the catching that much more rewarding. Idaho Department of Fish and Game rules apply, so check before fishing.

The most exciting feature of the wilderness is the rivers—provider of food, transportation, comfort, and adventure. They are mighty rivers, long and pristine rivers that tumble along on their downhill quest to reach the sea. They are untamed rivers, with no obstructions; wild rivers that carve their way through volcanic regions dotted with boulders and rapids—especially the Salmon, the “River of No Return!” No matter how you get your gear to the headwaters, bring your raft or kayak and ride Class I to Class V whitewater all the way back to civilization. Full of thrills, chills, and spills, the river for which the wilderness was named is one of a kind. A private party float should only be

attempted by experienced, properly-prepared boat handlers. For the less experienced, many outfitters are prepared to host the ride of your life.

Wildlife viewing is truly rewarding in this pristine and undisturbed backcountry. The *U.S. Forest Service User's Guide* states there are 258 animal species living in the area, including mule and whitetail deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, black bear, mountain lion, and moose. Several non-native species of upland game birds, such as chukar and gray partridge, were introduced before the wilderness designation.

The canyons, caves, and rocks bear witness to the indigenous peoples' use of this area for twelve thousand years. The Shoshone and Nez Perce tribes traversed this land during seasonal gathering—hunting and fishing. Many of the current campsites are historic and prehistoric locations and have great cultural significance. It is important for archaeologists and scientific researchers to find artifacts in their original locations and positions. The Antiquities Act was creat-

BELOW: *It was a sunny day ... An oasis in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness presents itself in the form of the Winter Inn tavern and store at Warren.*

RIGHT: *You don't say? A welcome sign presents the ground rules to those entering the central Idaho mountain town of Warren.*



aviation adventure

ed to protect the historic culture of the wilderness, and prohibits the collection or removal of archaeological artifacts. Always remember, “Look but don’t touch.”

Gold was discovered in nearby Florence in 1861. By 1866, news of the bonanza attracted thousands of miners into the wilderness in search of wealth. Small communities were formed, and then abandoned when claims ran out. Evidence of old mining claims and prospecting activities can still be found. Nearly 2,100 mining claims were located in, or immediately adjacent to, the wilderness. As of 1995, only twenty-five claims remained within the wilderness. In addition, an estimated 490 mining claims exist close to, or within, excluded areas.

For more than fifty years the few old-timers who live in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness have depended on bush pilots to bring supplies, medical care, and mail into the remote landing strips in the mountains of Idaho. The Central Idaho Wilderness Act allows the use of aircraft to continue. There are twenty-six active landing strips in the wilderness, and they will not be closed, other than temporarily for maintenance—unless they become unsafe. The few private strips are available for emergency use only, or on a fee basis with permission only.

It is a worthy legacy of Frank Church and other like-minded citizens that this rugged and exciting land protected by law forever remain unspoiled, untouched, and undeveloped, so that we and our children's children can see, touch, smell and feel the way things used to be in the wild and wonderful Northwest.

Linda J. and Bud Henderson, married freelancers, live in Lewiston.

A Cautionary Note

For more information about the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness, contact the U.S. Forest Service office nearest your point of entry. Do not go in without map, compass, and knowledge of conditions. Do not attempt to fly in without instruction from an experienced backcountry pilot. —*Linda J. Henderson*



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PHOTO BY BRUCE ANDRE

**Bountiful
harvest on
the Palouse:**
*There's been a lot for
northern Idaho organic
farmer and magazine publisher
Mary Jane Butters to smile about in recent
years, including a \$1.3 million book deal with
Random House in 2003.*

mary jane's farm

By Carol Price Spurling

**growing
organically
and cultivating
fame in rural
Moscow (Idaho, of course)**

nestled at the base of Paradise Ridge, in the rolling Palouse hills eight miles south of Moscow, lies a small organic farm, a place owned by a woman whose name is becoming very big: Mary Jane Butters.

In the fall of 2003, Butters received a \$1.3 million advance for her book, *Mary Jane's Ideabook, Cookbook, Lifebook: for the farm girl in all of us*. The book, the first installment of a two-book deal, was released in May. Now that her publisher, Random House, is sending her on a national book tour this summer and dropping big bucks on full-page ads in the *New York Times*, fame is becoming a mixed blessing for Butters. She no longer jumps when journalists call. Nor when show business calls. She was recently offered a television series. She declined.

But she won't mind if you call her Mary Jane. Formalities just don't fit this petite woman, dressed for the day in a white thermal shirt and black down coat and jeans, and a red bandanna knotted around her neck. Her long blond hair, going silver around her face, is pulled back into a long braid. Shiny-costume aquamarine earrings give her hands something to fiddle with while she talks.

not your typical farmer or celebrity

She's a farmer, carpenter, entrepreneur, magazine publisher, photographer, and writer hitting her stride now, at age 51, after an early career in the U.S. Forest Service. In the early 1970s, Mary Jane moved from Utah, her childhood home, to spend two summers in a northern Idaho fire lookout tower near Weippe. Then she spent two years at the Moose Creek Ranger Station in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, working as the first female station guard in the Selway with its legendary fire control officer, Emil Keck.

After ending her Forest Service career, and with the idea of having a family beginning to stir,

Mary Jane moved with her husband to a ranch on the Snake River. And it was at that ranch, working as a farmhand, that she seized and held onto the dream of living on her own farm. She and her husband finally found her dream property in Latah County, and they moved there with their children, young Meg and baby Emil, in 1983. Mary Jane was twenty-nine years old.

"My place showed up one day as an ad: 'Remote old homestead, five acres, orchard, well, \$45,000.' It had been rented to some Hell's Angels and they'd spent a year throwing their garbage and beer cans out the back door," Mary Jane recalls.

Mary Jane forged a strong relationship on the site, but it turned out to be with the land and her children. Her marriage fell apart after a year. Two decades later, she laughs about the lot she had to deal with: a drafty old farmhouse with wood heat, an outhouse, and a baby in cloth diapers.

"My forest service experience prepared me for that life," Mary Jane recalls. "I knew how to split firewood. So you have to go to the bathroom in a bucket? That's OK. So you

can't wash your clothes every day? That was OK too."

She insists, though, that she wasn't a hippie, despite appearances. "I breastfed my kids, but it was on a schedule," Mary Jane says.

She paid the bills by working as a seamstress and an upholsterer, occupations that allowed her to work with her children nearby. Her worktable rested on sawhorses and the kids played "fort" underneath. A photograph from those early years in Idaho shows her milking a cow, wearing daughter Meg in a backpack, and smiling.

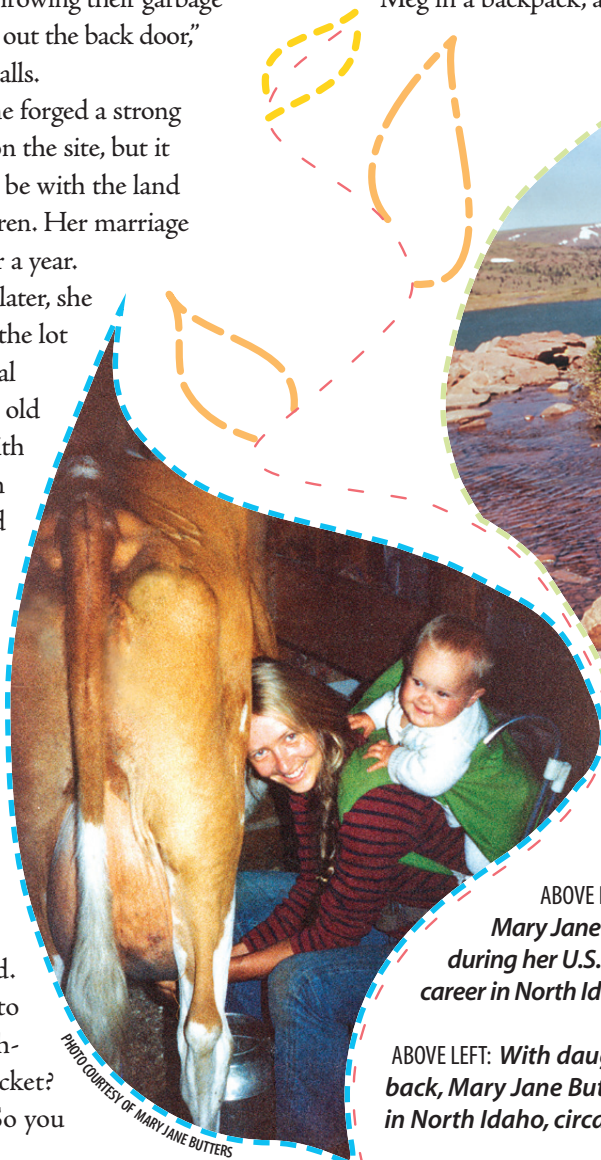


PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY JANE BUTTERS

ABOVE RIGHT:
Mary Jane Butters during her U.S. Forest Service career in North Idaho in the 1970s.

ABOVE LEFT: *With daughter Meg on her back, Mary Jane Butters milks a cow in North Idaho, circa 1980.*

not your typical farm

after visiting Mary Jane's five-acre farm, it's easy to see why a person would want to hang on to it, running water or no. A twenty-minute drive from Moscow to the acreage is picturesque. Rolling past classic Craftsman farmhouses and a grassy trailer park, the road gently climbs out of fields into the pines, winding to the top of the ridge, where it presents you with a sudden, expansive view of the classic dune-like wheat fields of the Palouse stretching south toward the Snake River.

Glimpses of a brand new 10,000-square-foot, three-story "farmhouse" as you approach offers evidence that life has become more comfortable at the farm in the past few years.

A sign at the bottom of the iris-lined lane—"MaryJanesFarm: Living like we'll die tomorrow, Farming like we'll live forever"—offers a philosophical welcome.

On this bright early spring day, a biting wind makes it more pleasant to be indoors, where most of the farm's employees are staying busy. In the basement of the new building, two employees are handling orders and bookkeeping. Nearby, in a spotless and spicy-smelling work area, a crew of three is mixing up a batch of one of Mary Jane's organic convenience food mixes, sold by mail-order through her catalog, through outdoor stores like REI and Patagonia, and at health food stores nationwide.

Mary Jane originated the idea of selling packaged instant organic falafel, what her kids called “Mom’s Awful Falafel” in its experimental stage, as a way to help some farmer acquaintances find a market for their organic garbanzo beans. The line now includes a wide variety of “office cuisine” and “back-country cuisine” items such as corn salsa, no-cook curry rolls, African pea soup, and Nick’s couch potatoes (Nick Ogle is her husband, the farmer next door, whom she married in 1993). Mary Jane has also revamped the comfort food of her Mormon childhood, offering an organic all-purpose baking mix, and an organic alternative to the trademarked Jell-O, called the ChillOver.

Finding sources of organic lentils, potatoes, and garbanzo beans has turned out to be more of a challenge than Mary Jane imagined. Her own attempts to raise the raw products didn’t turn out well.

“The hang-up is in the processing. You just can’t find any one to process a measly two thousand pounds of garbanzos at a reasonable cost when they’re used to volumes closer to six million pounds,” she explains. “In order to process organic anything, they have to clean out the line—that takes a day—and then run mine. I’ve talked a few processors into it, but after it was all said and done, they vowed they’d never do it again.” But the heirloom garlic and some of the herbs used to flavor the mixes are grown right on the farm, and she has found a regional source for organic flour, pasta and cheese.

In the early 1990s, Mary Jane received what she considered to be a strong reaction from Idaho legislators and the powerful Idaho Farm Bureau Federation lobby [the Farm Bureau is Idaho’s largest agriculture lobby group] after she applied with the state’s agriculture department for the right to put “organic” on her packages of falafel. “This Farm Bureau guy growled at me, ‘You’re just trying to put ‘organic’ on the label and charge more for it, and we’re not going to let you do it because your food isn’t any different than ours,’ and they sure didn’t,” Mary Jane recalls. Even so, she still speaks highly of her dealings with the Idaho Department of Agriculture.

“Although bureaucracy is always difficult, I was able to find individual employees, who, once they understood what we were about, were willing to help us,” Mary Jane says. “And Idaho is much more open, much less regulated, when it comes to new things like agri-tourism or alternative agriculture. Idaho is a can-do kind of place.”

Things really have changed: the farm got a grant from the state a couple of years ago to work on turning mustard into



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At her organic farm in the Palouse hills eight miles south of Moscow, Mary Jane Butters strikes a pose by her shiny 1981 biodiesel-powered Mercedes.

bio-diesel; now Mary Jane's 1981 Mercedes runs on homegrown fuel. (The Mercedes, by the way, was recently painted coral pink, to match one of Mary Jane's favorite nail polish colors.) In March, Mary Jane was a featured speaker on the topic of "The New Face of Agriculture on the Palouse" for a Moscow Chamber of Commerce agribusiness forum. And in 2001 she received the Idaho Progressive Businessperson of the Year Award.

In another outbuilding, several more employees laugh and chat as they share a pizza for lunch. The main room here is stocked with vintage-looking (Mary Jane defines "vintage" as anything pre-dating the 1950s) aprons, pillows, purses, samplers, and other items made by rural women locally and throughout the U.S., available through her website and catalog.

Down a gravel path, just next to the barn, stands a former wreck of a shed, restored on the outside with corrugated steel, transformed on the inside into a gleaming stainless steel but still country-style kitchen, used for staff meals, recipe development, family gatherings, and photos.

In yet another building, more employees are working, keeping company with enamelware dishes and wire baskets and other antiques lining the rafters: props for photo shoots, and inspiration for the design team that creates the combination magazine and catalog—and manages the very



large website. One of the more popular features on the website is the "Farmgirl Connection,"

a bulletin board where rural women from all over the country (or wannabes) share everything from crochet patterns, to questions about how to raise goats. It's just one of the ways Mary Jane is attempting to re-create the close-knit support system she grew up with as a Mormon in Ogden, Utah. These days she does without any theological labels.

"The buzzword these days to describe what I had is 'community,'" Mary Jane writes in her book. "My parents had family, neighbors, and church members . . . I have my family, but for daily neighbor-ing, I have farmhands and employees whom I love dearly. For church, I have shareholders."

not your typical entrepreneur

On this April day, Mary Jane and her staff admire the glossy proofs from the new four hundred-page book they've just finished—the book that would be published by Random House in May. The advance money she received for the book last fall helped build the imposing new “FarmHouse,” still awaiting plumbing, wiring, and finish work. When it's done, it will consolidate all the various farm workspaces under one roof, and include a small bed and breakfast as well as Mary Jane's living quarters. Having just spent six months writing her book, often getting only three or four hours sleep a night, Mary Jane's in no hurry to get the building done.

“My most recent brush with almost going under was after 9-11 [2001],” Mary Jane says. “Just before that happened, my monthly sales of my backpacking line hit \$35,000 a month. One year after 9-11, they had slowly dwindled to \$1,800 a month. The first thing people do in a recession is cut back on their food budget. I had to lay off employees, I thought my time was up, everything finished. My banker was talking about a farm auction. So I won't be taking out a bank loan to finish the FarmHouse project. I just don't want to be in that position again.”

Mary Jane is no stranger to asking for money, but she's careful about to whom she appeals for help. Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard helped her out with a loan when she was starting out, but Mary Jane talks about the dozens of friends who came to her aid in the lean times. “Since 1993, sixty-five people, our shareholders, have breathed life into my farm by writing out checks that total well over a million dollars,” Mary Jane says in her book.

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Now that the immediate threat of going under has passed, shareholders are receiving dividends in the form of fresh vegetables, free-range eggs, and overnight stays in the farm's wall tents, which are available for paying guests at more than \$100 per night.

"Our shareholders are glad to see

their extra money doing something good," Mary Jane says.

She encourages others to try her method of raising funds, if they're willing to do the substantial homework required. The State of Idaho, she says, provided her with brochures and instructions. "Not only that, but they encouraged me and truly wanted me to succeed."

"We support what Mary Jane is doing," says Pullman, Washington resident and shareholder Richard Old, who was profiled in Mary Jane's magazine in 2002. "She's working to find a way for local farmers to really practice sustainable agriculture here. Helping her achieve that goal will help protect the Palouse I love so much."

Mary Jane herself doesn't have a savings account or 401K, preferring to keep money flowing, working as a catalyst for social change. She has a dream that rural women, who are buying land in higher numbers than ever before, can transform the rural economy, maybe even save the family farm.

Part of the strategy, and why she's invested so much energy into her own Mary Jane brand, is what she calls "putting a face to food." She hopes that someday people will value food enough to pay farmers for its true costs. She wants to see lots of

farmers, and especially women, do the same things she's done, and more.

"Women have the imaginations to see how things can be done differently, and they are less afraid of change, of trying something new," Mary Jane says. "Grow the ingredients for salsa to sell at the farmers' market, give salsa-making workshops, and then toss in salsa dance lessons. That's the kind of thing we have to do to make it work."

a new, old kind of school

Mary Jane has set up a kind of farmer apprentice program for those who'd like some hands-on experience before taking the farming plunge: the Pay Dirt Farm School. The

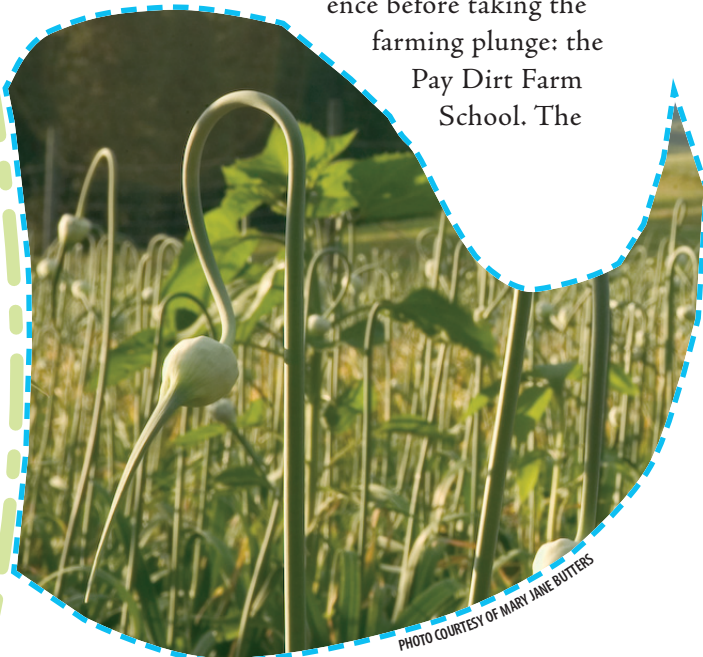


PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY JANE BUTTERS

RIGHT ABOVE: *Garlic plants on Mary Jane's Farm in the Palouse hills of northern Idaho.*

RIGHT: *A morning view of the bed and breakfast at the organic farm owned by Mary Jane Butters in rural Moscow.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY JANE BUTTERS



curriculum, and length of the program, is individualized for each student. "I find out about a student's land, what they want to accomplish, whether they like the harvest or planting side of things, or if they want to turn it back into prairie . . . and we work out a program for their time here at the farm," Mary Jane says.

Moscow farmer Patrick Vaughan, formerly in the Army for twenty years, says of his Pay Dirt experience: "As I have a family, I was given the flexibility to come out to the farm one or two days a week, ready to work. A mid-day meal prepared by all on the farm crew provided an opportunity to discuss the work we were performing and to ask questions. I was given a comprehensive book on organic farming and was required to read it and take notes on each chapter. I got to witness and participate in the seasonal progression on the farm, from the first conceptual layout of row crops and seed-ordering while there was still snow on the ground, to the dusty, sweaty harvest season. I learned that I do love the work, and I know this because I did it, not just studied about it."

happy to be here

Mary Jane looks forward to her daughter, Meg, and son-in-law Luke moving back to the farm this summer. They will work on the product development side

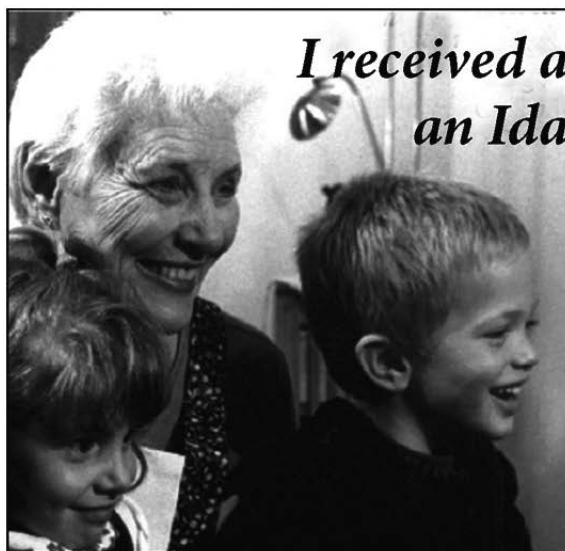
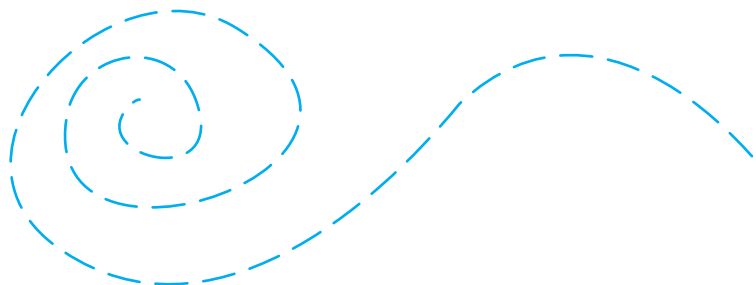
of the business.

"I'm getting calls from people wondering if they can put 'Mary Jane' on their doll or their silverware divider, and I ask, 'Where's it made?' and they'll say, 'China,' and I just won't do it," Mary Jane says. "I want to keep people around here employed."

She's happy, too, to have her son Emil, formerly an auto mechanic, working on the farm. With her husband Nick's 650 acres right next door, making the transition to organic, and her adult children nesting nearby, Mary Jane is hopeful about her small farm's future.

"Meg gets to come with me on the book tour, and then we'll come home, and I don't care if I ever leave again," Mary Jane says. "I moved to Idaho because it had a lot of wilderness, a lot of open spaces, and good land, and it still does. The rural dream is alive here. It can still be done."

Carol Price Spurling lives in Moscow.



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Missouri Ridge

By Marylyn Cork

Spring has come to Missouri Ridge, that low rampart of humpbacked granite knobs running westerly down Dufort Road in North Idaho's Bonner County. My father, who owned part of it, always called it a spur of the Selkirk Mountain Range. The ghosts of Handsome and Cloudy West ride

attempts to escape. Spinning lariats flash in the sun, and the acrid smell of singed hair permeates the air as hot branding irons stamp the ranch brand into tough cowhide . . .

Memories coalesce and take shape in my mind, like objects forming in the ephemera of mist that rises from the Pend Oreille River on

it began to evolve. It was fully developed by the time my best friend Babe and I had reached our eleventh year. The two of us were cowboy fanatics, inspired by our prodigious reading of Zane Grey novels, comic books, and Big Little Books featuring our heroes. Roy Rogers was our supreme idol, but we also admired

The ghosts of Handsome and Cloudy West ride there . . . Calves bawl, cowboys whoop. Agile cutting horses spin and turn with the lightning-quick lunges of the resisting bovines, thwarting their determined attempts to escape. Spinning lariats flash in the sun, and the acrid smell of singed hair permeates the air as hot branding irons stamp the ranch brand into tough cowhide . . .

there. The time is the late 1940s. Roundup has come to the Rocking R Ranch. Its cowhands are pursuing ghostly cattle up, down, and around the ridge's boulder-strewn slopes and brush-choked, shallow ravines. Calves bawl, cowboys whoop. Agile cutting horses spin and turn with the lightning-quick lunges of the resisting bovines, thwarting their determined

early fall mornings. Indian skirmishes, rustlers beaten back. Five little girls roaming the ridge like vagabonds, letting their imaginations run free. Sleeping out with nothing to fear, growing up in a simpler time. That was life on the Rocking R.

Looking back, I can't put my finger on how the fantasy of the West brothers and the Rocking R Ranch came about, or exactly when

Gene Autry, The Lone Ranger and Tonto, Hopalong Cassidy, and Red Ryder. Concealing them at school between the pages of our textbooks because our teachers did not approve, we also devoured *Ranch Romance* magazines, and nagged my father until he (usually) gave in and hauled us into Sandpoint to see the latest cowboy movie at the Panida Theater. Out of such, in our imagi-

rocking r memories

nations, we transformed ourselves into cowboy brothers, and our environment into a ten thousand-acre ranch running whiteface Hereford cattle and Palomino horses (think Trigger). We brought our little sisters into the make-believe. Cowboys, after all, have sidekicks.

On the ridge, Babe was transformed into a laughing, carefree cowpuncher named Handsome West, who co-owned the Rocking R with his moody brother Cloudy—the role I portrayed. Handsome had a pretty Mexican wife, Rosa—my sister Rachel—while Cloudy's wife was Rosa's equally pretty sister Rozalita—Babe's sister Patsy. My sister Janice, the youngest member of our quintet, filled the role of Shorty, our ranch foreman.

Our first order of business was to build a ranch house. Fortunately, Dad and my maternal grandfather owned and operated a small sawmill at the foot of the ridge, so there were plenty of slabs and other scrap lumber at our disposal. We purloined nails and tools from my paternal grandfather, without his knowledge or permission. Like pack mules, we lugged the whole conglomeration to a spot between the first and second hump of the ridge, at its base, so as to make transporting those boards as labor-free as possible. We hacked down small trees to use as framework for the house, nailing the poles to four conveniently spaced larger trees to enclose a space roughly ten feet by eight. Boards nailed to the poles a foot or so above the ground made the floor. Originally intending to construct a roof overhead, we nailed a framework of poles to the trees as well, as high up as we could reach. Tiring of the labor involved, we dispensed with the ceiling, however, after the floor was down, opting instead to spread our sleeping bags and blankets on the rough, hard boards of the floor and gaze at the stars. We told ourselves we were comfortable.

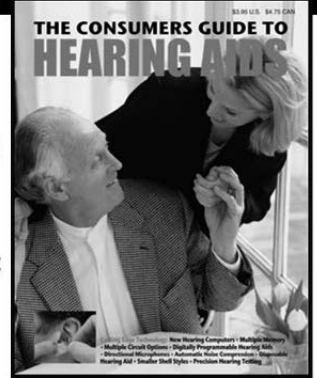
Meals were prepared on a campfire in a ring of rocks in front of the "ranchhouse." We fried meat and potatoes in one of Mom's cast-iron skillets and boiled coffee in a can, toasting the rare wiener or marshmallow on the side. Until we got caught, Handsome and I occasionally relaxed after supper with a cigarette snatched from Dad's stock back at home. Life on the Rocking R quickly came to seem more real to us than the mundane

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rocking r memories

existence of our everyday lives.

Oh, the adventures the five of us had! We roamed on foot or on horseback, pretending that the reluctant saddle nags and gentle draft animals under us were the golden Palominos of our dreams. When we weren't fighting off "bad guys," as we brandished Granddad's treasured homemade wooden rifles as weapons, we explored, gorged on serviceberries in season, gathered the wildflowers that bloomed in profu-

sion on the ridge. Often we "nooned" at the remains of an old homesteader cabin in a grassy meadow where purple irises and lilacs still flowered. A relic of the early 20th Century, the structure was even then slowly sinking into oblivion close to a little spring where we savored clear, cold drinking water. Water was in short supply on the ridge.

Not all of our adventures were imaginary, either. One occurred when my Uncle Chuck from

Montana brought his family to visit. The family consisted of his son "Little Chuck," my age, and the wife Big Chuck had married after the death of my Aunt Jessie; plus the new wife's daughter, a spoiled brat named Karen. The stepsiblings were mortal enemies, an antipathy that never died. Karen wanted to go with us that day, and there was no preventing it. We had to take her to "climb the rocks" high on the ridge. While scaling a cliff she slipped at



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

the top of a sheer granite chute and began to schuss toward the bottom, screeching like a cat in pain. Reaching out an arm, I grabbed her coattails as she shot by, and managed to hold on—fortunately, she was as scrawny as a half-starved kitten. If I'd dropped her, she could have broken her head, or maybe an arm, and I expect that Charles wished many times that she had.

I even underwent an epiphany of sorts on the ridge. Perhaps it was

far below and in the distance, clearly delineated for the first time, was a world I hadn't known existed. To the south, Cocolalla Lake shone serenely blue in the sun. So did Little Coke, now Round Lake, in a westerly direction, almost obscured by trees. Sandpoint and the Long Bridge lay behind me, to the north. Not even the bright sun glinting off the water could cause my eyes to tear and the sights I was seeing to blur. I never mourned another day about having

there anymore—not since the advent of television and two cars in every garage. Where my sisters and I, and our contemporaries, were lucky to be transported to Cocolalla Lake even once a week to go swimming, now kids have many avenues of recreation and entertainment open to them and the means to access them.

Unlike the fast-paced summers of today, when I was a child our hiatuses from school passed slowly, too slowly sometimes. They posi-

Today, the world of my childhood is gone. Missouri Ridge has been transformed, and not for the better, in my opinion. Houses peek from places where once the cows of the Rocking R roamed free ... To my knowledge, no children play there anymore—not since the advent of television and two cars in every garage.

a sort of metaphor for coming of age. I was in the seventh grade the autumn the county nurse came out from Sandpoint to the little two-room grade school I attended. She checked our eyesight and sent Mom a note recommending a visit for me to an eye doctor as soon as possible. I needed glasses! The diagnosis hit me like a blow to the heart and I wept for a week or more, convinced I was disgraced for life. The moment the optometrist slipped the dreaded "specs" on, however, I was thunder-struck. Objects not directly in front of my nose came clear for the first time in memory! I raced for the top of the knob directly behind our house. There, spread out before me,

to wear those glasses. To this day, my "specs" are the first things I put on in the morning and the last I take off at night.

Today, the world of my childhood is gone. Missouri Ridge has been transformed, and not for the better, in my opinion. Houses peek from places where once the cows of the Rocking R roamed free. Fences enclose some of the parcels that former farms have been subdivided into. "No trespassing" signs make it hard to revisit some of the old haunts. The ridge has been many times logged, and now is being mined for granite rock for road building and landscaping purposes. To my knowledge, no children play

tively dragged as the days wound down, and by the time school bells rang in the fall, most of us were eager to return to our little two-room country school and the opportunity to re-acquaint ourselves with the friends we hadn't had contact with all summer. The only constant in life is change, and childhood has changed a lot in a few short generations—and not for the better, I sometimes think. I mourn the lost innocence of yesteryear and the childhood I was privileged to enjoy growing up on Missouri Ridge. Long live the Rocking R!

Marylyn Cork lives in Priest River.

After-school Writing Clubs Proliferate in Boise

By Heather Glass

When I started a writing club at W.H. Taft Elementary School in Boise in 2001, the principal and I expected nine to ten students to attend. We were stunned when forty-three students piled into the classroom to try their hand at writing. After completing the fourteen-week program, thirty-five young authors proudly presented their hardbound books at an authors' celebration.

Since then, the enthusiasm has spread. More than seven hundred children have participated in twenty-eight writing clubs in the Boise School District alone. No longer able to lead every club, I developed the Write On!-trademarked Writing Club program and shared my expertise, materials, and strategies with parents, volunteers, and teachers willing to lead clubs at their schools.

After the third successful year of leading writing clubs, I compiled everything I had developed and pub-

lished the Write On!-trademarked Instructor's Manual. This manual includes all the ideas, strategies, forms, and examples necessary for volunteers to lead successful after-school writing clubs at their schools.

Many of the writing club instructors are parents wanting to be more involved in their children's schools. Others are writers seeking meaningful community involvement in their fields of expertise.

Fourth through sixth-graders meet for weekly seventy-five minute sessions during the fourteen-week program. They each write, revise, and illustrate a hardbound book complete with copyright, dedication, and author

page. Students go through a seven-week step-by-step revision process, revising their beginnings and endings, adding voice and details, and improving vocabulary, sentence fluency, and titles.

The young authors also participate in weekly activities for learning creative writing and illustrating techniques, writing to prompts, sharing their writing, and making two-by-three-inch hardbound books called "Shorty Stories."

The writing club program concludes with the Authors' Day celebration, where the authors read their professional-looking books aloud to friends and family. As of March 2005,

In this 2004 photograph, Abel Degollado works at W.H. Taft Elementary in Boise on one of the illustrations for his revised story. The pictures are created with a paint over crayon technique, then scanned for the final book.



PHOTO BY HEATHER GLASS

students' finished books are also published on the Internet.

Overall, the writing club takes children on a wonderful journey of writing, reading, illustrating, sharing, and nurturing their potential. The skills and interest they develop in the writing club definitely influences their future.

The continued high numbers of students participating in the after-school writing clubs have led to their success and rapid growth. The only problem facing the writing club is too many children signing up for the limited number of spots available. In the manual, I suggest limiting the size of the writing club to ten to twenty students per school. Yet thirty-five to seventy-five students apply in each school.

These students have "caught the fever!" They have heard from other

students how much fun the program is. They have seen friends' books and now want to make books for themselves. And although this enthusiasm is great, it isn't the only benefit of the writing club.

Parents, teachers, and young authors alike have reported that participation in the writing club increases student interest in writing, reading, and illustrating. Measurable and marked improvements are also seen in students' descriptive writing abilities.

Because the writing club program uses the "Six Writing Traits" terminology popular across the nation, the guided instruction is consistent with what teachers use in their classrooms.

The program emphasizes and reinforces state standards for fourth-through sixth-grade student achievement. Not only are these skills discussed in the writing club, but the chil-

dren actually apply these concepts to their own work. It is documented that students in the writing club tend to focus more on writing in their classrooms, read more, and write more.

To date, the program is operated through a partnership of schools, the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, and my company, Write On!™ Publishing. The Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation has been the sole provider of funds for the past three years.

But, because of increasing interest in the writing club program from children, schools, and parents, a nonprofit foundation, called Publishing Young Authors, has been created. Funding collected through the foundation will help expand writing clubs to more schools. The goal is to have the writing club programs in forty Idaho schools during the 2005-2006 school year.

Boise resident Heather Glass is a certified teacher with a reading endorsement. She taught fourth grade for eight years.

It started out as one voluntarily run after-school writing club four years ago. Now eighteen clubs are guiding more than four hundred young authors through the creative process!

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The Covert Fraternity of Fanatical Fly-Fishermen

Part one of a two-part series: I Fish, Therefore I Fib

By Shirley Lund

A word of wisdom to would-be wives: Be aware that your normal-looking significant other may have pledged his allegiance to a close-knit, yet widespread society called the Fraternity of Fanatical Fly-Fishermen, a.k.a. Four-F'ers. Members of this bizarre brotherhood have pledged to follow uncertain leads into vast frontiers in search of virgin streams. (In case you don't know what a virgin stream is, it's one that still retains its native species of fish and has never been violated by a fisherman

of the human species.)

In addition to his sacred pledge, your prospective spouse may also have uttered a solemn vow: once discovered, the location



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

RIGHT: A member of the fly-fishing cabal caught in the act at Green River Lake in Wyoming.

ABOVE RIGHT: A variation of the "McGrin Special" fly, technically designed by a key member of the so-called Fraternity of Fanatical Fly-Fishermen.

OPPOSITE: A member of the secret "Four-F'er" fly-fishing brotherhood, the crafty "McGrin" engages in stealthy activity on the Bear River in southeastern Idaho.

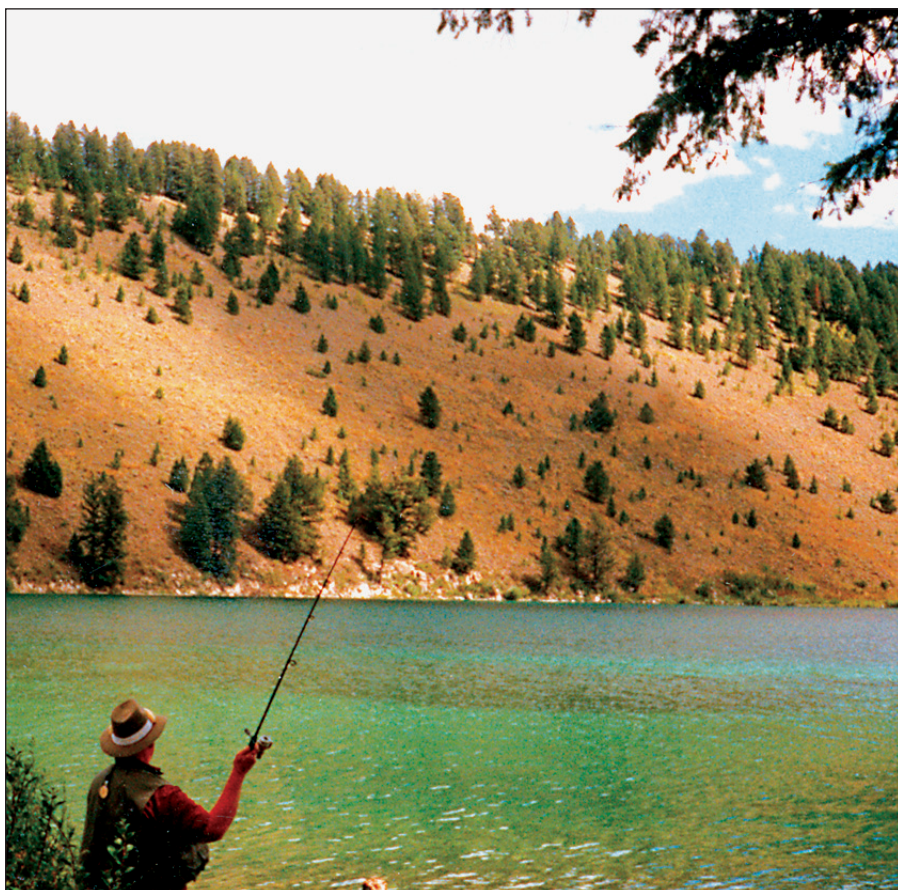


PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

of a virgin stream is never to be revealed to anyone, not even to another Four-F'er. It is very difficult for these fervent fishermen to abide by this vow, however, since it is impossible for them to resist showing off their latest prize catch. In order to brag about catching the largest possible fish on the lightest possible line without giving away vital information, you will often hear the following dialogue between fishermen:

"Just look at this beauty!"

"That's a nice fish! Where did you catch it?"

"In the mouth, of course."

"Of course you did. I catch mine there, too. What fly did you use?"

"A Hairy Harbinger. I tied it myself."

Other fishermen, of course, would have no idea what a Hairy Harbinger is. The first order of any bona fide fly-fisherman is that he becomes an expert at fly-tying. By doing this, his claim to fame is that he becomes the designer, the manufacturer, the sole owner of a specific specimen. The names they give these flies are almost as outlandish as the flies themselves: Sequined Silkworm, Grangy Grubworm, Latex Larvae, Cagey Carbuncle. If one is especially appealing to fish, it receives the distinct privilege of being named after its creator. The recipes for these fish dinners, (especially if a fish favorite), are known only to the cook. If it turns out to be a laudable lure it is filed away, along with other important fly-fishing triv-

ia, in the vast tackle box of his mind.

How do I know all this? I learned it from a bona fide, dues-paying Four-F'er. During my dating days there had been no outward signs that my future husband had pledged his loyalty to this complex clan. One day in early February, shortly after we returned from our honeymoon, he

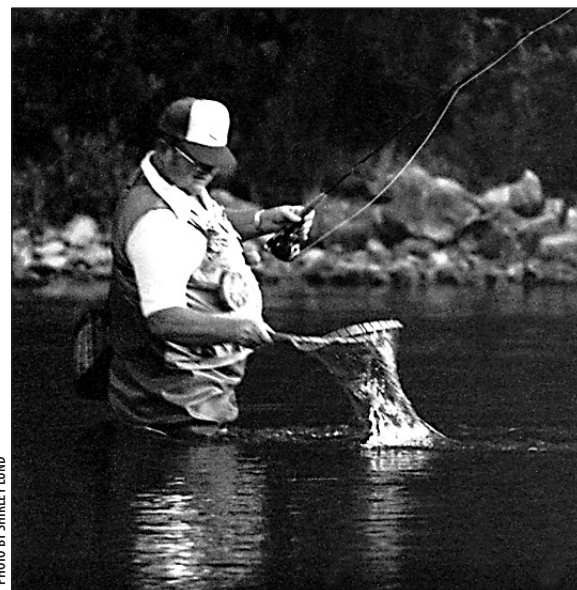


PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

Members of this bizarre brotherhood have pledged to follow uncertain leads into vast frontiers in search of virgin streams ... [a stream that] has never been violated by a fisherman of the human species.

dragged out a conglomeration of fishing gear and began sorting through a dozen or so boxes of unidentifiable bugs. Right away, his eyes glazed over and a wide grin spread across his face. It seemed only natural that he be dubbed "McGrin."

"What does he mean by we?" I thought, when he mentioned that he might have to tie a few more flies before "we" started fishing. Surely he meant one of his colleagues of the fly-fishing faction. Surely I hadn't inadvertently promised to love, honor, and be a fishing partner when I recited my marriage vows.

I decided to ignore this reference to my automatic inclusion into the Four-F inner sanctum by changing the subject.

"What's the matter with plain old worms?"

Wrong question to ask a fly-fisherman!

"Nobody fishes with worms," McGrin replied disgustedly. "Fly-fishermen learn to match the hatch. Do you know what a hatch is?"

I didn't, but had a feeling I was about to find out. McGrin proceeded with a long discourse on the complicated diet of fish. When he finished the lecture, I had learned that a hatch is a particular



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRLEY LUND

flying insect, or bug, that hatches around, or in, a particular body of water at a particular time of the year. My future on-the-ground education revealed the fact that fish have discriminating tastes and sometimes even change menus in the middle of a meal by spitting out one fly and forcing the frustrated fisherman to try another. That's why fishermen have to carry boxes and boxes of flies and stick with them all over their fishing vests and hats. And all this time I had thought they

were just for decoration.

By the time fishing season opened in June, McGrin had painstakingly produced a replica of every fly and bug known to man, plus a few that not even God had thought of. When I received a new fishing pole and reel for Mother's Day, I suspected I was about to be initiated into the select Fraternity of Fanatical Fly-Fishermen. Being a novice, I had no idea what this initiation consisted of and innocently accepted an invitation to embark on a search for a virgin stream. As we bumped along rutted cracks created by a lost wagon train in the last century, I began to

beneath the rocks as though anticipating the tasty treats about to be tossed at them.

I will not elaborate on the fly-fishing lesson that was evidently a necessary part of my initiation. Suffice it to say, McGrin impatiently untangled my line from all the surrounding bushes, recovered his valuable hand-tied flies from snags in the middle of the stream and the branches of the nearby trees. When he finally ran out of four-letter words, he suggested we trade my new rod and reel for trolling gear and buy a boat. Sounded like a good idea to me.

With his duty concluded,

"What's for breakfast?" called this member of the maniac milieu, completely oblivious of my shivering, insect-bitten body, sunburned face and mess of tangled red hair. "How about some fresh fish?" ... It's too bad the rock missed him.

doubt the wisdom of my decision.

The narrow tree-lined pair of ruts, called a road on our map, suddenly came to an abrupt end at the edge of a beautiful green meadow surrounded by pine trees. What better place to find a virgin stream than in a valley called Paradise, I thought. A wide stream of sparkling cold water carved its way around the base of a steep mountain. The fish didn't seem to be aware that we were a threat to their survival and were lolling contentedly in dark pools

LEFT: The author, Shirley Lund, photographed with Four-F'er evidence at eastern Idaho's Palisades Reservoir. "But I don't fly-fish!" she maintained.

BELOW: A specially-made "McGrin" fly, photographed paraphernalia of the Four F'er brotherhood.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

McGrin hurried off by himself with a fish smorgasbord of flies while I proceeded to set up a reasonable facsimile of comfort and efficiency in the middle of a wilderness. An old fold-up army cot was the sole piece of furniture, and various sizes of dilapidated black pans and a campfire served as a substitute kitchen. He returned about dark with a happy grin, a full creel, and an empty stomach.

What do fishermen do between fishing time and bedtime? Sit around a campfire, talk about past discoveries and conquests of virgin streams, breathe smoke, eat charred hot dogs, and try not to be eaten by the flying carnivores of night. When the tall tales run out, you retire to the relative comfort of a tent if you have one—which we didn't—and a warm sleeping bag if you have one—which we didn't. It seems that sleeping on the ground under the stars and learning to survive with as few modern conveniences as possible was another phase of my initiation. I was eternally grateful for the small army cot McGrin had thoughtfully provided until I was grossly reminded that not all the carnivores of night are flying. Some are creepy, crawly.

Early the next morning, I huddled close to a smoky campfire contemplating the dreary prospects of burnt bacon and cremated eggs. A cheery voice greeted me from the middle of the stream.

"What's for breakfast?" called

this member of the maniac milieu, completely oblivious of my shivering, insect-bitten body, sunburned face and mess of tangled red hair.

"How about some fresh fish?" he added, holding aloft the defeated brookie he had just caught with his latest concoction of deer hair, cat's whiskers, and chicken feathers.

It's too bad the rock missed him.

FINAL FRONTIER FIASCO

What members of the Fraternity of Fanatical Fly-Fishermen lack in tolerance for those outside their clan, they make up for in perseverance. The memory of the misguided missile I had hurled at McGrin as a frustrated response to his cheerful greeting gradually faded after a couple of weeks. He tentatively gathered his courage and invited me on another excursion into the wild frontier in search of yet another virgin stream.

"Things will be better this time," he promised, remembering my very obvious disinterest in becoming a member of this fatuous fraternity. "The road is paved, and I've got a tent to sleep in. And an air mattress," he added eagerly, scrutinizing my face for any sign of forgiveness for the previous debacle.

If I put him in a situation where he has to decide between his

precious Four-F membership and me, I will undoubtedly be the loser, I thought. If you can't beat 'em, you might as well join 'em. I wondered who it was that coined that other old adage: Old fishermen never die; they just smell that way. Must have been a fisherman's wife.

The road we traveled was paved, all right. Two lanes of traffic and a wide ribbon of swift-running water coursed between towering cliffs on either side. Just when I thought we would run out of canyon, we spotted a sandbar left by receding water after a high runoff. McGrin hurriedly parked the car under one of two trees, donned the standard attire of fly fishermen everywhere—a sloppy fishing hat and a many-pocketed fishing vest decorated with a variety of colorful flies. With fish net and basket fastened optimistically to his belt, he plodded happily away.

Content to be a passive observer of the idiosyncrasies of fly-fishing, I settled beneath the remaining tree with my favorite book. I awoke two hours later to find the sun had outmaneuvered the protective branches of the tree and my bare legs were cooked to somewhere between medium and well.

McGrin returned about sundown with a limit of nice rainbow trout. Exhausted and thirsty from his daylong ordeal of providing sustenance, he reached for the plastic container of lemonade we

had immersed in the icy water to keep cool, being minus one refrigerator. The rope that held it to an overhanging branch suddenly gave way, and the fast-running water grabbed it and sent it sailing downstream.

Not about to be outsmarted by a capricious current, McGrin chased after the fleeing container, fishing boots flapping noisily in his wake. He raced along the bank, darting in and out of the thick brush and stumbling over obstacles in his path, then made a desperate, unsuccessful grab.

Catch me if you can! The bouncing bucket taunted from just beyond arm's reach. The determined McGrin squished along for a few more yards; then, in a last-ditch effort (no pun intended), made a flying tackle any football player would be proud of. A significant splash announced his victory as he grabbed the evasive vessel with both arms. He sloshed back to camp with his hard-earned trophy, blessing it all the way with a variety of unprintable words.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

**I dozed into a fitful sleep,
only to be rudely awakened by
water dripping on my face.
If I ignore it it will go away, I thought
sleepily, and rolled over—right smack
into a pool of icy water.**

Our camp had been modernized from the previous fiasco by the addition of a small pup tent. That night, as I tried to sleep in the cramped space on an air mattress that wouldn't hold air, I thought of a few unprintable

words of my own. It was obvious that no amount of tossing and turning was going to mold the hard ground to accommodate my aching body. To add insult to injury, every toss and turn caused the heavy bedding to painfully

OPPOSITE: *Evidence of why the secret fly-fishing fraternity operates covertly.*

BELOW: *An original, hand-tied fly-cast fly. Dubbed the "McGrin Special" by the investigator, also the author of this article.*



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY LUND

assault my sunburned legs. Finally I dozed into a fitful sleep, only to be rudely awakened by water dripping on my face.

If I ignore it it will go away, I thought sleepily, and rolled over—right smack into a pool of icy water. My frantic efforts to fight my way out of the wet bedding sent down a cold shower on the sleeping McGrin.

"Where did all the blankety-blank water come from?" he shouted accusingly, hastily exiting the tent right on my heels.

The combination of hot days and cool nights had condensed the air into dew which had collected on the inside walls and ceiling of the small tent. Surely, I thought,

this is enough to dampen the enthusiasm of the most ardent fisherman. Could I now stay home and enjoy all the modern conveniences invented by men to make work easier for women?

Probably not, except for the fact that we were expecting a baby in a couple of months. Not even die-hard McGrin was willing to risk the possibility that he might have to deliver a baby at some isolated fishing spot. When his son was born early in November McGrin shouted excitedly, "Oh, boy, a fishing partner!" and rushed right out to buy him a fishing pole.

Shirley Lund lives in Soda Springs.

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SPOTLIGHT CITY

Mountain Essence

View of Sawtooth and White Clouds mountains defines central Idaho village

By Ryan Peck

The view from Stanley is the type of image you find framed and prominently placed on the walls of offices all over the world. It is not hard to imagine an overstressed cubicle dweller taking a moment of reprieve from stacks of work to gaze at such a picture. You know the kind: jagged, snowcapped peaks, a free flowing river, and the sunlight hitting everything just right. Famed photographer Ansel Adams made a career of that kind of western mountain image. These pictures are relaxing because they serve as reminders that somewhere beyond the concrete confines of larger cities, there exists a place like Stanley.

Just as a photo of the Stanley view may provide stress relief for urban office workers, the real Stanley and the surrounding areas provide stress relief for visitors in a number of other ways. River recreation is one. For Middle Fork of the Salmon River floaters, and those who raft other central Idaho rivers, Stanley is the place to pick up supplies before the trip. For example, Stanley business proprietors Christy and Charlie Thompson, owners of the Riverwear store, have had many river rafters drop in on them in the early a.m. to stock up on fleece before a trip. Christy Thompson said, "People are glad to see we have so much warm stuff in our store ... not everyone realizes how cold it can get up here, even in July." If you are an

angler, Stanley offers up the surrounding high mountain lakes, Valley Creek, and the bustling Salmon River—all brimming with trout species.

Fat tire mountain bikers come to Stanley for incredible rides such as the Fisher Creek Loop. Hikers wear holes in their socks all over the Stanley Basin's backcountry wilderness, from Alpine Lake to Imogene and beyond.

Then there's the big chill in Stanley.

PHOTO BY KEN KLUSMIRE

CENTER SPREAD: Rafting the Upper
Salmon River near Stanley.




Hardy winter enthusiasts are able to find hundreds of miles of trails to navigate with snowmobiles or cross-country skis. Backcountry skiers earn their turns in abundant untracked powder from the Williams Creek yurt or simply tracking into Stanley Lake. Even the stressed-out city slickers finally make it to Stanley (as opposed to settling for a picture on a wall) for some much-needed "R'n'R" which means just hanging out and taking it all in for rest and relaxation. Oh yeah, and there are hot springs everywhere! Stanley means many things to many people, but everyone agrees on one aspect of the town: regardless of the season, it is gorgeous.

If you mention the town of Stanley to someone who has been there, you will, without a doubt, hear the word "beautiful" mentioned somewhere in the response. Nestled at the base of the majestic Sawtooth and White Clouds mountain ranges (more than forty peaks in the area exceed 10,000 feet), Stanley is the epitome of a rustic western town. The winters are long—and the temperatures are frequently the coldest in the Lower Forty-eight. "When it is 40 below you stay inside," says longtime Stanley resident Ken Klusmire. "When it is that cold, it even makes for a daunting trip to Ketchum [about sixty miles, mostly on mountain roads] in your car. If your car breaks



PHOTO BY PAUL FRANTELLIZZI

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: A snowmobiler catching some air near Stanley; a view of old Stanley from the foothills behind town, circa 1910; and a look from the Redfish Lodge's front lawn, circa 1940.



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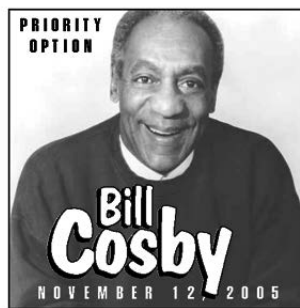
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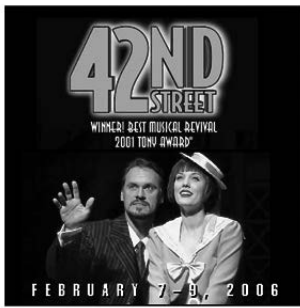


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down you are in trouble. I'd rather stay home. I like that cozy feeling when it is scary outside but cozy inside." To defend against the frigid weather, nearly every Stanley resident has a wood-burning stove. Stanley's buildings are almost all log structures done in a natural finish. Most of the roads in town are dirt or gravel. And the population is small, hovering somewhere right around one hundred. "The town is so small, it nearly shuts down when someone goes on vacation," Stanley Chamber of Commerce Clerk Rocky James said. If anyone does decide to get out of town (maybe to remind themselves of the city stresses), there are three ways to choose: Lowman to the west, Ketchum to the south, and Challis to the north. The nearest town in each case is approximately sixty miles.

THE SHEEPEATERS, GOLD MINING, AND THE HOMESTEADERS—A SHORT HISTORY COURSE

After the last ice age finished the job of carving out the Stanley Basin, people showed up. About ten thousand years ago, prehistoric hunters who lived in the area may have enjoyed the scenic splendor of the basin at times while carving out a primitive existence. A few thousand years later, a group of Shoshoni Indians called the Tukudeka (Tookoo-dee-ka) occupied the area. Literally translated, Tukudeka means Sheepeater. The Sheepeater Indians' diets, however, consisted of more than sheep. They also subsisted on the plentiful salmon runs that filled the Salmon River and surrounding drainages. The Sheepeaters lived in the area until the latter part of the



19th Century, when the United States Cavalry transported them to the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in southeastern Idaho. For some great historical reading on the Sheepeater Indians, check out *Middle Fork and Sheepeater War: A Guide* by Idaho authors John Carrey and Cort Conley.

It was also in the 19th Century, albeit the very beginning of the century, that Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery (1803-1806) brushed past the Stanley Basin on its way to the Pacific Coast. The explorers stayed long enough to give the new name "River of No Return" to the Salmon River. They gave it the new label for two reasons: one, it wasn't getting them to their destination (the Salmon River actually flows in an easterly direction outside of Stanley), and two, the Salmon River has some rough rapids.

Fur trappers looking to fuel the fashion trends that favored beaver pelts soon followed westward explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Alexander Ross, who worked for the Hudson Bay Company, led the first trapping party to the area. Ross and company crossed Galena Summit on September 18, 1824. If you ever make the drive, stop and check out the roadside marker commemorating the trip. By 1840, the winds of fashion changed, and the beavers were depleted.

Twenty or so years later, gold seekers started appearing. In the mid-1800s, all you had to do was exclaim "Gold!" and one thousand or so people would immediately show up. Placer gold in what would later be named the Stanley Basin was first found in 1863, the same year President Abraham Lincoln signed the congressional act that created the Idaho Territory. A year later, Civil War veteran John Stanley led some miners into the basin that would bear his name. Stakes were established and people went about the business of striking it rich. The Sheepeaters, the cold, and



PHOTO BY PAUL FRATELIZZI

shortages of much-needed supplies eventually deterred these miners from the area.

A decade or so after Stanley and friends left the basin, miners returned with new fervor. Not only did they find gold, they found silver. A supply center was opened and since everyone liked long-gone John Stanley so much, they named the supply center after him. Other towns sprang up in the area and began booming. When you make it to Stanley, visit the nearby ghost towns of Custer and Bonanza. In their heydays, those towns each had populations of more than five thousand. The arrival of so many gold and silver seekers coincided the demise of the Sheepeaters. The Sheepeater War was kicked off when five Chinese miners were killed in 1879. Nobody could actually prove it was the work of the Shoshoni tribe, but the U.S. Cavalry was called in, and a war began. Eventually the Sheepeaters were rounded up and transported to the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

If you visit Stanley today, you can still occasionally see someone panning for gold. A gentleman with a long white beard and dirty jeans told me that if you know what you are doing, you can make a living panning for gold. In fact, this is how he claimed to make his income. Once the fast gold petered out, the populations did, too. This was not, however, the end of industrial mining. For proof that the practice continues, drive up the Yankee Fork and check out the dredge.

Homesteaders and sheepherders both showed up at the turn of the (last) century. The people who chose to call the Stanley Basin home were hardy souls. Because of the harsh environment, many ranches were abandoned.

THE STANLEY STOMP

With the advent of roads and the nascent contraption called an automobile, people came to Stanley because it was an outdoor recreation destination. Even so, for many decades Stanley retained its Wild West persona. Emphasis is on the word “Wild.” Shootouts on Stanley’s Main Street were recorded as recently as the 1970s. Selma Lamb recounted the story of the lady who set up shop across the street from the town’s main bar. “Judy Smith used to own a hardware store across from the Rod and Gun Saloon. She would get her fence knocked down every week because of the fights!” And then, of course, there was the popular Stanley Stomp, which took place down at Stan Harrah’s Mountain Village (Riverwear now occupies the space). “You could start the night at whatever bar you wanted . . . and you could walk around town with the same glass from place to place. On Sunday mornings the Stomp would take the glasses back to the right bars,” Lamb told me.

One of the beauties of the Stanley area is that the landscape remains essentially timeless and unchanged. Federal legislation passed more than thirty years ago made it so: in 1972, the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) was created, bringing a federal designation to a little more than 750,000 acres of Stanley Basin land. The SNRA spared the Stanley Basin from the destruction of land misuse and overpopulation that some had feared. In a sense, because of the legal impediments that largely block growth, Stanley is not going to get any bigger. Simply put, there is little private land available in the Stanley area.

Today, about one hundred hardy souls call Stanley “home”

year-round. The size of the town increases to a few hundred in the summer. The village has two main grocery stores, a post office, and some hotels. Now missing from the town are amenities such as banks and movie theaters. Selma Lamb offers her insight, "There are no movies, swimming pools, or video games. To do well in Stanley you have to be an outdoor person. People that aren't only last a certain time and then they are gone." When I asked her son Lloyd (now in his 30s) what it was like to grow up in Stanley, he said, "Let me tell you, I didn't know I was so alone because of all the imaginary friends I had. No, really, there were other kids, and we were all friends. It didn't matter what clothes you wore, what sports you liked, or what your parents did for a living, we were all friends." He added, "We always played outside, even in the winter! Our parents would kick us out of our houses to go play as long as it was at least zero degrees outside."

Yeah, it's the winter life that really takes some adapting. If you ever make it to Stanley in the winter, you may wonder where the houses went. It seems that most of the town's dwellings get buried under about five hundred cords of firewood. But, it is during the winter that Stanley offers the most solitude. Frequently Highway 21 to Boise closes due to avalanches, and the number of people coming up to visit the town decreases a bit. But the winter days and nights can be incredible. I have gone to Stanley in the winter . . . I spent my days cross-country skiing and then I spent my evenings relaxing with friends in the hot springs. The stars are so bright you don't even need headlamps. Klusmire offers his take on winters in Stanley, "At first I thought I would go nuts. But then I relished the solitude. The winter was just long enough that by the end of it I was ready for the tourists and interaction."

In summer, the town triples in residents and thousands of tourists come through. Christy Thompson told me with a laugh, "I think more friends and family visit us in Stanley than they did when we lived in Twin Falls or Salmon. At first I thought it was because they wanted to see us. Now I think that is only partly true."

The winter/summer dichotomy strains many Stanley area businesses. You go from working seven days a week in the summer, to having to close down in the winter or operate only a few

days a week (in fact, the city library only opens for three days a week in the winter). The seasonal population shift also puts a strain on available housing. It isn't uncommon for raft guides and other seasonal employees to choose camping-out for the summer. Longtime river guide Jared Goodpaster said, "When I first started guiding I would just camp out. It was the most beautiful bedroom I have ever slept in. The only problem I had was coordinating sleeping in the tent with rain . . . It seemed like whenever I would go sans tent it would pour on me."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Leadership has been changing. Stanley got a new mayor a few years ago named Paul Frantellizzi. A longtime friend of the Lambs, Frantellizzi came to Stanley to escape the stresses of life in New York City. What he found was a beautiful mountain community to live in. Frantellizzi's job, along with the Stanley City Council's, hasn't been easy. Stanley faces what officials view as an incredible number of federal mandates. In addition, there are the issues of affordable housing, tourism pressures, and town unity. They say that it is easier to lead a large group of people than a small group, but Frantellizzi, along with residents of Stanley, are working hard to take the town into the future without losing what makes Stanley great in the first place. But it is not just the political leadership that is changing in Stanley; it is also the business owners. Many of the businesses in the valley have changed hands in the last few years. With new ownership comes new enthusiasm and change. But one thing that will not change is Stanley's beauty.

And one highlight mirroring the natural beauty at Stanley is Redfish Lake.

LEFT, ABOVE: *The classic view of Stanley in its winter coat of snow, with a rocky mountain range in the background.*

RIGHT: *Relaxing in the hot springs at Stanley, Idaho.*



PHOTO BY PAUL FRANTELLIZZI



PHOTO BY KELSEY NEWMAN

LEFT: *Looking at Redfish Lodge from Redfish Lake, located at Stanley.*

RIGHT: *Stanley's "Mountain Mamas" take a moment to relax.*

THE MAGIC OF REDFISH LAKE

Redfish Lake, as natural science shows us, has been around for a long time. No doubt, the Sheepeaters and other historical inhabitants appreciated the lake's beauty and the resources it provided. Beyond that, settlers started coming to the area en masse when roads were completed over Galena Summit in the 1920s. In 1920, B.D. Horstman built a hotel and boating facility on the lake. Bob Limbert in 1929 kick-started the tourism business at Redfish Lake. Limbert did that by expanding the lodging and boating infrastructure to what it is today. He was also good with words, saying of the Redfish Lake area, "... In places like these, one may sit entranced for hours at a time, for it is impossible to exaggerate the grandeur, the sublimity, and the impressiveness of the place. Its fascination cannot be accurately described. It is a land of a thousand different moods and no one can know it for what it is without living in it for every day of the year."

Over the years, Redfish Lodge has changed hands eight times, and it's said that each owner has worked diligently to improve the hospitality and beauty of the area. The Crouch family from southern Idaho now owns the resort. Today, it's a 16.8-acre resort. On the premises are forty-one rooms and cabins, a restaurant, a bar, marina (with new docks), a fleet of Redfish-owned boats, and an on-dock service station. Redfish is one of the most photographed lakes in the nation. Longtime human resources manager Kelsey Newman offers her take on Redfish: "It is an unforgettable, magical, family place. It feels like a second home in the mountains. You immediately feel like you are part of the family."

RAFTING THE RIVER OF NO RETURN

Rafting is a quintessential Stanley activity. Four commercial companies that offer trips on the Upper Main Salmon River right outside of Stanley: The River Company, White Otter, Sawtooth Adventure Company, and the company formerly known as Triangle C (it was recently purchased by a new owner—new name to be announced). These companies run four major rapids on the Salmon River including the class IV rapids Shotgun and Sunbeam Dam. Folklore has it that Shotgun Rapid was named when two early Stanley residents (presumably miners) lost a shotgun in the rapids. Among rafters, the rapids name refers to the way it tends to launch passengers and guides into the air. Longtime guide Lloyd Lamb offers his insight: "It looks fairly harmless but there are some hidden obstacles that will launch you in the air ... they don't call it shotgun for nothing. Next thing you know you are married to the water, you know, like a shotgun wedding." Shotgun was featured in a Milwaukee's Best beer commercial in the 1970s. Sunbeam Dam or "The Dam" as guides call it, is one of the more novel commercially run rapids anywhere in the world. "The Dam" is an old blown-out dam. Built by the Golden Sunbeam Mining Company in 1910, the dam was engineered to power a gold mine up the Yankee Fork. Shortly after the dam's completion, however, the mine went bankrupt. In addition, the dam was blocking the migration of Chinook and sockeye salmon upriver (salmon were so plentiful at the turn of the century that a cannery was once considered for Stanley). If you ask a guide what happened, he or she will tell you that some locals got together and loaded a small boat full of dynamite and sent it out on the reservoir toward the dam. The boat got washed up on the southern shore, and rather than the dam getting blown up, the entire shore was blown out. Other stories recount the effort as being done in a more formal fashion by state employees. Either way, the river was reopened in 1934.

THE MOUNTAIN MAMAS— HAVING FUN, HELPING OUT

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF STANLEY



The Mountain Mamas are a group of local ladies who, though no one directly admits it, run the town of Stanley. The only requirement for membership is that you are a woman. Once the second x chromosome requirement is met, the Mamas don't exclude members for any reason. You don't even have to be a mom. Membership ages range from 20-somethings to women in their 80s.

The Mamas have been around for more than a quarter century. "I have been a Mama for as long as I can remember," says Selma Lamb.

The Mamas' greatest success is putting on the fantastic Mountain Mamas Arts and Crafts Festival every third weekend of July. The festival ranks among the most diverse and successful arts and crafts fairs in the state. This year the group offered 140 booth spaces and sold out in a week. The Mountain Mamas also put on a September quilt festival and a Christmas cookie party.

The Mamas are predominately a service organization. Lamb says, "There are no dues; the main requirement of membership is that you are able to work at the fundraisers." All of the funds raised by the Mamas are donated to public interest causes. The causes have historically included the Stanley School, Fire Department, The Stanley Meditation Chapel, and the Stanley Library.

Twin Falls native Ryan Peck spent six summers and a winter in the city of Stanley.



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June

18 Sawtooth Relay

July

4 Annual Kids Parade and
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15-17 Idaho State Bowhunters
State Jamboree
16-17 Mountain Mamas Arts and
Crafts Show
17 Chamber of Commerce
Pancake Breakfast

August

27-28 Sawtooth Salmon Festival
28-9/2 PAPI Paint Out, Redfish Lodge

September

16-18 Mountain Mamas Quilt Festival
24 Fireman's Ball
26-30 Isabel's Needlepoint Retreat at
Redfish Lodge

October

2 Closing day, Redfish Lodge
tba Hunter's Ball

December

tba Mountain Mamas Christmas
Cookie Party

PHOTO BY PAUL FRANTELLIZZI

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The Plumb Simple Radish

By William Studebaker

My neighbor Tom told me, “It’ll be another couple weeks before we can start farming. We don’t even plant beans until late May or early June.”

Well, I don’t farm, but I do raise a small garden. It’s tucked away in a flowerbed. I don’t raise much, just simple plants.

Take radishes for example. They’re simple. They’re the type of vegetable I can keep domesticated. Carrots I can handle, too. I won’t try anything as complicated as corn or beans. And potatoes about kill me.

Once, out of my mind, I thought about raising colicroots, but I don’t do herbs well. I like docile plants. They do what you tell them, and they don’t get ideas on their own.

Corn’s just a high-rise for earwigs. A bean’s too sociable. It’ll intertwine with its neighbors, and pretty soon the whole damn row is all snarled up. I won’t weed if I have to fight runners or rhizomes.

No siree, the radish is for me. Just stick some seed in the

ground, let it sprout, water a bit (warm them up, cool them down), and then start thinning. Like carrots, you can eat while you thin. That’s a bonus.

If you thin too much, and don’t take particular care, a radish will get big and split inside. Once it

For those with frail, fragile, immature, or just bland taste buds, the radish is a challenge. It’s not horseradish, but it’s a step above cabbage’s kissin’ cousin kohlrabi and two steps above a rutabaga. It’s a real threat to a green onion, too.

For those with frail, fragile, immature, or just bland taste buds, the radish is a challenge. It’s not horseradish, but it’s a step above cabbage’s kissin’ cousin kohlrabi and two steps above a rutabaga. It’s a real threat to a green onion, too.

splits, it’s pithy. A pithy radish makes a poor salad enhancer.

A radish should have a solid red skin, and with a light scrubbing, glow like a ruby.

Inside, its meat should be white, firm, and moist. The heart should be dense and crisp. Every bite should snap; every snap should radiate a vegetable warmth.

An onion has a pedestrian taste, while the radish effervesces. Its regal aroma is a whiff of delight. All of the bonuses aside, it’s the simplicity of the radish that attracts me. I don’t mean simple if compared to a sequoia. I mean simple artistry and simple husbandry.

I mentioned radishes to Farmer

one spud short

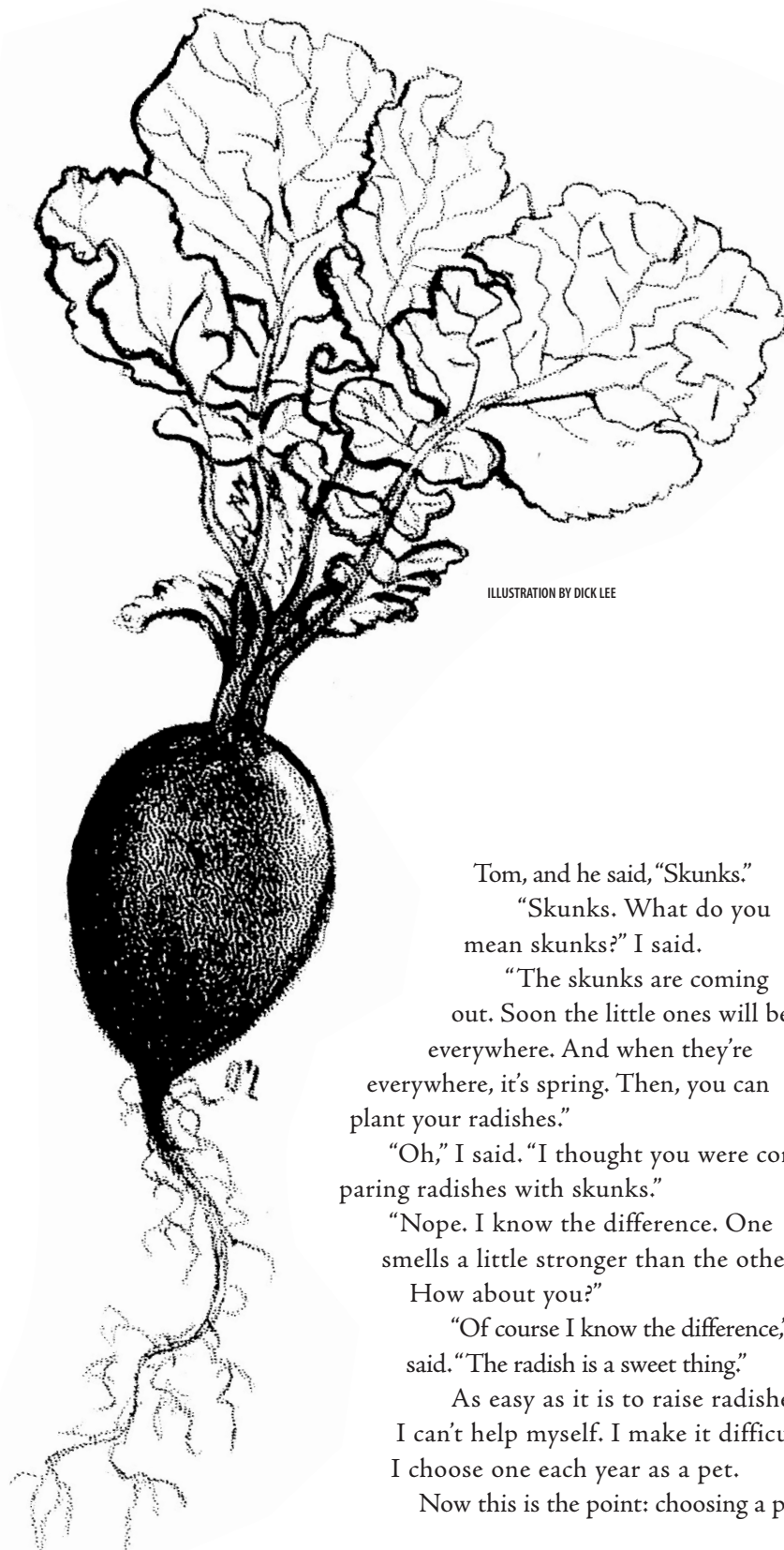


ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

Tom, and he said, "Skunks."

"Skunks. What do you mean skunks?" I said.

"The skunks are coming out. Soon the little ones will be everywhere. And when they're everywhere, it's spring. Then, you can plant your radishes."

"Oh," I said. "I thought you were comparing radishes with skunks."

"Nope. I know the difference. One smells a little stronger than the other. How about you?"

"Of course I know the difference," I said. "The radish is a sweet thing."

As easy as it is to raise radishes, I can't help myself. I make it difficult. I choose one each year as a pet.

Now this is the point: choosing a pet

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one spud short

radish isn't as simple as raising a row of the little beggars. The idea is to pick one that's uniform, nice, and bulbous, with a supple, red skin. Its taproot should be long and energetic. But even more important than being firm of body, it should have a sweet spirit and a willingness to lean toward the sun.

I play compositions by William Billingsley, one of Idaho's

Then, I let it climb out of its slumber to the stimulating mix of "Landscape Sketches." And with the deep, prolonged strum of the piano strings, it grows as if the distant horizon were its goal.

That's some aspiration for a radish.

Well, Farmer Tom and I know what should be done with a pet radish. It should be taken to the

beets, zucchini, squash, watermelon, and the frilly fruits.

So, a pet radish, as if it were a pet head of lettuce or a pet clump of watercress or a pet goat, gets eaten. Like no other pet, it can transport a salad from the profane to the sublime and cause the palate to tingle with culinary passion.

The pure, natural joy comes from careful nurturing, thus making

Now this is the point: choosing a pet radish isn't as simple as raising a row of the little beggars. The idea is to pick one that's uniform, nice, and bulbous, with a supple, red skin. Its taproot should be long and energetic. But even more important than being firm of body, it should have a sweet spirit and a willingness to lean toward the sun.

great composers, to my pet radish. The music soothes and stimulates.

When my pet is absorbing water filled with delicious nutrients, I play a "Fantasy for Flute."

county fair. But radishes are spring and early summer critters, and by late summer, they're all pithy and hot and gone to seed (bad seed by late August). The fair is for pickled

the gardener's love, the gardener's delight . . . and that's the right way.

William Studebaker lives in Twin Falls.

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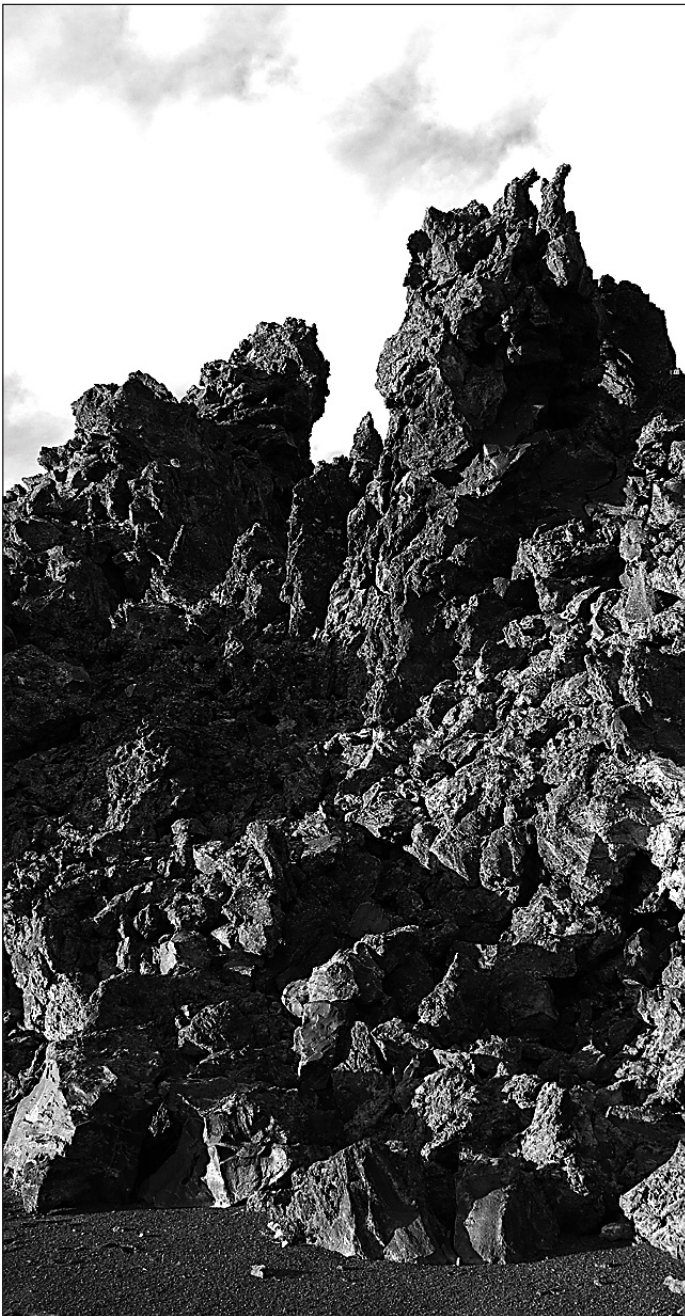
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Three Tips for Enjoying an Underrated Idaho Treasure

Story text and photographs by Dave Clark



It's like black vomit from the bowels of the earth." That was the graphic reaction of an emigrant in the 1860s when crossing the lava fields of what is now the Craters of the Moon National Monument in south-central Idaho. That colorful description was probably the most critical ever expressed about this volcanic landscape, but the negative comment most commonly heard at the visitor center desk is, "This place is nothing but black rock."

After working at the monument for more than twenty-five years, this phrase came to aggravate me every time I heard it. I wasn't aggravated by the visitors, but by the fact that I knew that none of these visitors had really given themselves a chance to experience the place at its best.

Visitor surveys done at the park showed that statistically nearly all visitors to Craters of the Moon arrived between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. sometime during the months of July, August, or September. The problem with visiting the lava beds during this time is that all you experience is an overpowering, parching sun, a drying and too persistent wind, and a stark, seemingly lifeless, dark landscape. No wonder so many visitors never return and so many Idahoans fail to identify the place as being as beautiful as Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon. Given a chance, however, I am convinced that anyone who followed these simple rules would come to view Craters of the Moon as equal to those scenic places.

Pictured: jagged, sharp, and difficult-to-walk-over "clinkers" formed from Aa lava at the Craters of the Moon National Monument in south-central Idaho.

craters of the moon lessons

Rule #1: Visit the monument early or late in the day

The monument is a different place near dawn or dusk. The first thing you realize is the terrain isn't really black at all. Much of the rock is a dark chocolate brown, but there are streaks of pure red bisecting the cinder cones where steam exited the ground and caused iron-rich lava to oxidize (rust). The cinders are not black, either. They are covered in iridescent blues and silvers that resulted because of a quick cooling that caused a thin coating of volcanic glass to form. And the lava flows so color-

less in bright light really have surfaces of cobalt blue or jade-green caused by trace elements picked up by the magma as it moved up through the earth's crust.

At these times of day, your senses are not overwhelmed by the sun's brilliant light—that creates the impression that the lava flows are bleak and barren. You realize plants are virtually everywhere at the monument. Limber pines, rabbit-brush, and sagebrush on the low slopes of the cinder cones, and numerous islands of vegetation are scattered throughout the lava flows. And on even the most recent of flows, you can see a multitude of different-colored lichens and mosses.

Getting out early or late allows you to experience an environment that is anything but lifeless. Mule deer are up and feeding. Marmots are gathering one more meal of grass or herbs. Forested areas that are silent during the heat of the day awaken with the calls of dozens of different species of birds. The wildly diverse environments resulting from different types of eruptions provide many niches that support nearly fifty species of mammals, more than 150 species of birds, and more than 350 species of plants. Hiking any of the park's numerous trails in the mornings or evenings offers many chances to catch glimpses of any of these animals.

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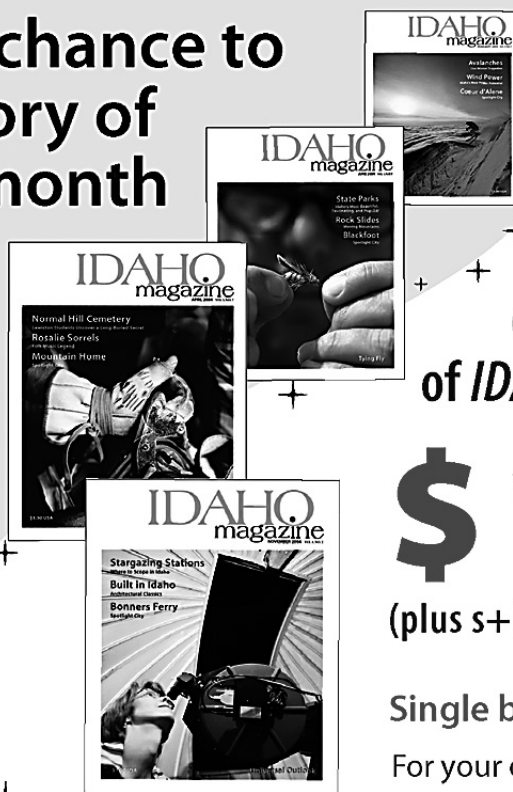
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Rule #2: Visit the monument sometime other than summer

While there is nothing wrong with visiting the monument in the summer (if you follow Rule #1) most people don't realize that the other seasons of the year also offer their own matchless experiences. Springtime actually comes to the

park rather late in June. But at Craters, just like in the meadows of Idaho's mountain country, spring brings out the wildflowers. Every year, the bloom of flowers burst forth with a rainbow of colors: the blues of the larkspur, yellows of the arrow-leaved balsamroot, and the pinks of the evening primrose and wild onion.

Cinders are covered with thousands of the dime-sized dwarf monkey flowers until the dark cones are

covered with a magenta-tinted blanket. Dwarf buckwheat, with their pale yellow pompoms, grow as small mats of vegetation with such precise spacing between each plant that people often think they have been planted by hand. Yellow desert parsley, red Indian paintbrush, and red, orange, or yellow prickly pear cactus grow where windblown dust has collected in the cracks that dissect the lava. Surprisingly, lush

ferns grow in the deeper cracks where conditions are cooler and moister than near the surface.

In the fall, the heat of summer disappears, giving way to chilly mornings that turn into warm, pleasant afternoons. The wind

BELOW TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: *Emerging from winter hibernation in April, the marmot is the harbinger of spring at the Craters of the Moon National Monument in south-central Idaho; The beautiful blazingstar flower, with its late summer bloom, marks the end of the annual floral display; Redfox, a protected animal species within the monument's boundaries, use the openings and cracks in the lava rock for den locations.*

BELOW BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: *A cinder field covered with dwarf buckwheat contrasts sharply with the barren Inferno Cone; Blossoms of prickly pear cactus can be red or yellow; Bright-colored lichens and mosses are found growing on the lava rock and older limber pines.*



seems to blow least during these months and the vegetation tends to take on a yellow-orange hue that just makes you feel good. Hiking is never better than in the fall and longer trips into the wilderness are not the death march they can be in the summer. A chance to camp overnight at Echo Crater and to experience some of the last pure, unadulterated solitude found anywhere is an opportunity only a few people take advantage of each year.

Winter brings an entirely different appearance and feeling to Craters of the Moon. As several feet of snowpack accumulate, colors disappear, and the scene is one of black and white. But the stark contrast gives the place an unearthly feeling that is unlike anything most people have experienced. Because the loop drive is closed in the winter, the monument is visible only for skiers or those on snowshoes.

The park provides a groomed trail approximately five miles long. It's one of the better trails in Idaho. The equipment used to set the track is the same as that used in the Winter Olympics held in Salt Lake City and can be used by cross-country skiers and snowshoers.

Rule #3: Take advantage of the programs offered at the monument

It is unlikely you have ever experienced a landscape such as the one found at Craters of the Moon. Because of this, it is very difficult to understand what you are seeing, how it came to be, and what can be expected to happen here in the future. Why are the smooth lava flows called "pahoehoe" and the flows of jagged, sharp clinkers called "aa"—or for that matter why do two types of flows exist in the first place? The National Park Service considers

it very important to provide answers to such questions. The park staff strives to provide visitors with an opportunity to understand and appreciate the park.

Certainly the exhibits in the visitor center, the trailside panels, and the park's publications can explain many of your questions, but the best way to learn and experience the park is to attend one of the programs or walks provided by a ranger naturalist. You have the opportunity to see things up close, ask all the questions you want, and be in the company of someone whose enthusiasm for this fantastic place is infectious.

During the summer, walks and evening programs in the campground are provided daily. Hikes are taken



craters of the moon lessons



OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: *The spatter cones are the most distinctive geologic features within the Craters of the Moon National Monument, harkening to its volcanic past; The red cinders of North Crater provide a dramatic background for the limber pine; Pahoe-hoe or "smooth lava" is very fluid and after cooling can resemble a flowing, but frozen stream.*

ABOVE: *The red cinders of Big Craters are found in areas that were exposed to steam which caused the iron-rich cinders to oxidize.*

into the lava tubes (caves attract the most interest of any feature in the park), but the hike most recommended is the Buffalo Caves hike given each morning. This hike leads to a little-used area of the monument and in the course of two miles visits nearly every type of volcanic activity and vegetative type to be found. At the halfway point, visitors are taken into Buffalo Cave, a lava tube, for an underground tour.

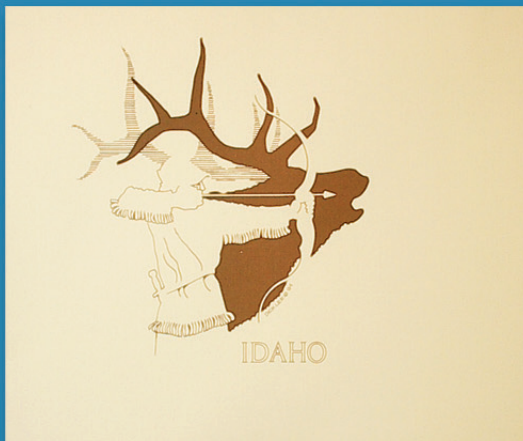
On Saturdays during the summer, special walks are provided for people interested in taking detailed looks at park themes. Hikes are made available for those interested in wildflowers, birds, geology, wilderness, and a variety of other topics. Participants get special attention from park staff and are taken into many areas that are seldom visited by others.

During the winter months, winter ecology programs are pro-

vided on most Saturdays. These programs provide a background on what wildlife is doing during this period and discuss winter travel and safety. Classroom work is combined with a snowshoe hike that is perfect for first-timers. Snowshoes are even available for those who need them. All of these activities limit the number of participants, so you need to contact the park to make advance reservations.

In all my years at Craters of the Moon, I always felt let down when a visitor told me that they weren't very impressed with the place. It wasn't the visitor's attitude toward the park that bothered me, but the fact that I knew they would have felt very differently if they had just altered their visit a bit. The one constant I observed was that anyone who got a glimpse of the true park was never disappointed. Those who got a really good look never failed to love it.

Dave Clark lives in Arco.



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1st Place, Adult Division, 2005 IDAHO magazine Fiction Contest

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FRIEND

There are few things more terrifying on this Earth than standing at the door to your girlfriend's father's house and mustering up the strength to knock.

Especially when it's 5 a.m. on a Saturday.

The door opened immediately, and a man wearing a plaid flannel shirt and holding a .12-gauge shotgun stepped out onto the porch.

My first instincts told me to run. Very far, very fast. Instead I reached out a hand, "Mr. Erickson, I'm Jordan Matthas . . . Callie's boyfriend."

He slung his shotgun and shook my hand firmly. "Nice to meet you, son. Where's Callie this morning?" he asked. His voice was gruff and wallowing in his own authority over me, the lowly suitor of his only daughter. He had a tanned, wrinkled face with blue eyes like Callie's.

There was an ornery glint to them.

"Caught some virus on Friday, spent all night coughing, with a fever," I replied, not quite managing to make a coherent sentence. It's five in the morning, and I'm talking to my girlfriend's dad, who's holding a well-used shotgun. I think I have an excuse.

"Too bad. Just us and Bullet, then."

"Bullet?"

On cue, a large German shorthair pointer bounded out of the house, nearly knocked me over, and then leapt into the back of the old pickup in the driveway. "He may be lively now, but just wait 'til tonight," chuckled Callie's dad.



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

What have I gotten myself into?

Callie started prepping me from our first few dates, though I would never have guessed it. She talked about chukar hunting with her dad and brothers. (Three brothers and an overprotective dad—all well-armed and good shots—I should have come to my senses then and there.)

Instead, I did something very dangerous. I fell in love. And so, when I went home with Callie, I knew a visit with the parents would be in order.

She broke the news with a smile, “Jordan, my dad invited us to go chukar hunting next Saturday. He really wants to meet you.”

“Chukar hunting?” I wasn’t new to shotguns; I’d been doing trap and skeet since I was ten. But there’s a big difference between a fluorescent orange clay and a sadistic upland game bird found in the most rugged terrains imaginable.

“Oh, well, it’s just his way of welcoming you to the family.” Her attempts to brighten the situation were failing.

“It’s a test,” I clarified.

She gave me a sympathetic look. “I guess you could call it that.”

Most dads enjoy torturing their daughter’s boyfriends; it’s a simple fact of life. Most dads

What have I gotten myself into? Callie ... talked about chukar hunting with her dad and brothers. (Three brothers and an overprotective dad—all well-armed and good shots—I should have come to my senses then and there.) Instead, I did something very dangerous. I fell in love.

believe that any guy conceited enough to think he’s worthy of dating *their* little girl deserves what’s coming to him.

But surely this was overboard.

I was standing at the base of a hillside—OK, a canyon face—staring up. You’ve got to be kidding me, I thought. Halfway up the

canyon side, a plump bird hopped out onto a rock and looked down at us, chuckling loudly.

"Jordan, you're not going to shoot any by looking at 'em," reminded Mr. Erickson, a.k.a. Callie's dad, a.k.a. Yes, Sir.

I'm thirty years his younger, but he tends to get an extra boost of energy out of pure sadistic pleasure. As he watched, I practically ran up the canyon, heading for a little flock of chukars behind a rock outcropping.

A brown mess of fur and slobber flew past me up the hill. "Bullet!" I snapped, but the dog ignored me and headed straight for the birds. I picked up the pace, dodging loose scree and trudging through hip-high sagebrush. I was just coming up on the outcropping when an explosion of feathers burst into the sky and repositioned themselves at the very top of the peak. I shouldered the gun too late, but it didn't matter anyway; Bullet had scattered them before I'd even gotten there. "Damn dog."

"I didn't hear a shot!" yelled Mr. Erickson, who was working the next peak over.

"They flushed before I could get to them," I managed, biting back a nasty annotation. Couldn't insult Bullet directly—he was the pride of Mr. Erickson's pack, and his favorite hunting buddy.

"Better move quicker then," he yelled back, before turning back to his own climb.

You haven't won yet, old man, I thought. I started up to the top, trying to close the distance between Bullet, the chukars, and me. This time I managed to get in range just before Bullet reached the flock. I brought my gun up, held my eye steady on one bird as it started over the next cliff top, and barely heard a sound as I squeezed the trigger. An instant later, the chukar wobbled in the air and fell dramatically to the ground. Victory! "Go get it!" I ordered Bullet. The dog looked at me dumbly. "Bring it here, boy!" Finally

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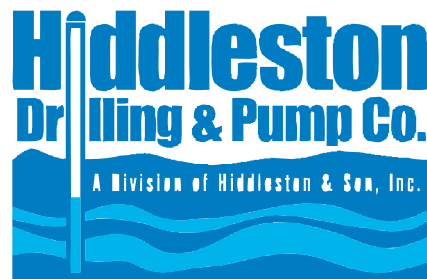
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1st Place, Adult Division, 2005 IDAHO magazine Fiction Contest

the mutt trotted off in search of the body.

I took advantage of the dog's search to catch my breath. We'd been going steady since dawn, and the sun was arching higher in the sky. I stood on top of the canyon wall with a view of the entire world.

Long shadows of clouds moved eerily across blue sagebrush plains in the distance, and the bright colors of canyon-land rocks dazzled in the morning sun. From the deep red chasm I was perched atop, I could see the plateaus and peaks stretching out to infinity. Hues of red, purple, pink, black, blue, and dusty brown like the dirt permanently embedded in the soles of my boots painted the scene. The high, thin blue sky collided with the rocky labyrinth of quartz, sandstone, and basalt covered with lichens and scattered blue-berried juniper trees. Besides a ranch house way out on the blurry horizon, it was just us—and a few noisy birds.

A staunch wind picked up, whistling through the canyon, and past the mountains surrounding us. It dried the sweat on my back, and I felt refreshed. So where was that dog—"Bullet?"

The dog had picked up my chukar and was trotting innocently back to its master—which, of course, wasn't me. Mr. Erickson looked surprised at the delivery. "I didn't think that last shot hit anything! Guess experience just makes up for it!" he boasted.

The dog was smirking at me. I managed to remind myself of Callie's stern warning, "Whatever you do, *don't* shoot the dog." . . . However tempting it might be.

Mr. Erickson surveyed the fresh set of mountains before us. "You wanna take the east hill?"

No one in their right mind could call that thing a 'hill.' But it wasn't a question, really. And if it were, it would be something on the order of, "Do you *really* think you're good enough for my Callie?"

"Sure, Mr. Erickson."

The old man was hiking up a slanted drainage to the west, and Bullet was tracking carefully in front of him, being cautious not to get too far out front. I muttered curses under my breath and hauled myself to the top of the most insidious 'hill' ever created. But at the top, over the sound of shallow gasps of air, I heard a distinct sound that haunts the dreams of every true bird hunter: kakakakachukarchukar. My heart started pounding again; they were just on the other side of the peak. I forgot about the thousand-foot vertical climb I'd just made and crept over the edge.

Just out of range, but I could change that quickly—oh no. "Bullet! No!" The furry abomination came flying out of nowhere and descended on the flock, scattering the birds to the four winds. (And when chukars scatter, they do it in style.)

Don't shoot the dog. For Callie's sake, don't shoot the damn dog. "Bad dog!" I growled, and it cast me a spiteful look and went to see if it could scare anything else away.

You would think that, as compensation for hellish terrain, beating morning sun, and parched climate, chukars could give us just one simple joy and fly downhill. But no, chukars fly uphill, and that's where I was headed once again.

Just then, I heard a yelp, and I turned to see Bullet whining and limping a bit. What now? I sighed. "Come here," I told the dog. He eyed me suspiciously (probably with good reason) and finally swallowed his pride and came. I examined his foot and found a long, deep gash splitting open his paw.

There's no way he can make it back to the truck like that. I looked around for Callie's dad, but he was out of sight. I groaned, sat down on the red-brown pebbles, and took off my boots and socks. I fashioned a pair of booties for the

mutt and put back on my boots sockless (My feet would be a minefield of blisters in an hour.) Bullet wagged his brown tail thankfully, and I shot him a stern look. "You stay with me, you hear? Heel!"

Amazing, the dog did. I did a double-take as he stiffened into a point and let me come up behind him before he dove forward. I fired and another chukar fell to the ground. This time Bullet trotted back to me and dropped the bird at my feet.

"What happened to my dog?" yelled Mr. Erickson, coming over the top, breathless (and yet, somehow still able to bellow). He started behaving like a real hunting dog, I thought.

"Hurt his paw," I shrugged. Those are a twenty dollar pair of synthetic wool socks, buddy; you'd better appreciate that.

Mr. Erickson gave me a long look, as if

Erickson couldn't help let a grin cross his face. All my anxiousness faded into exhaustion as we pulled up in front of Callie's apartment. She was waiting for us—trying without success to mask her famously worried expression.

After a well-deserved peck on the cheek, I went to pull my socks off the dog's paws and gather my gear. From the front of the dusty cab, I heard him mutter quietly, "He'll do, Callie. He'll do."

"I thought you'd say that," she whispered back.

With a kiss for Callie and a handshake for me, Mr. Erickson made his exit. "We'll have to do this again sometime, son."

Dear God. "Yes, sir," I replied with a smile. As the pickup rolled down the street I turned back to Callie, "So, did I pass?"

"Of course! He thinks you're wonderful."

Mr. Erickson surveyed the fresh set of mountains before us. "You wanna take the east hill?" No one in their right mind could call that thing a 'hill.' But it wasn't a question, really. And if it were, it would be something on the order of "Do you really think you're good enough for my Callie?"

finally summing me up and coming to a decision. "I'd say it's about time to head back to the car."

"Sounds good," I agreed, looking out over the distance we'd covered. Now if only I was wearing socks for the hike back . . .

We made it to the truck as the sky was turning into a pink and yellow masterpiece. We sat on the tailgate to watch the sunset, and sparse juniper trees made black silhouettes against blue twilight as the night began to hum around us. The last orange rays stretched out in front of the bumpy dirt road as Bullet slept soundly in the back, and Mr.

'He'll do' translates to 'wonderful'? She put a warm arm around me and sniffed the scent of sagebrush still hanging on my jacket. I suppose a walk through the beautiful canyon-lands isn't too much to ask for the girl of my dreams. I tried (in vain) not to limp too much up to the front door, and Callie hugged me tightly in the balmy summer air.

Then she leaned in close, and whispered, "Just wait 'til you meet my mother."

Boise native Ciara R. Huntington is currently a student at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Camas Time

Story text and photographs by Wendy Green

As I turned off Indian Valley Road into my driveway, I expected to be greeted by a host of blooming camas among the native bulbous bluegrass and Idaho fescue. But as I scanned the damp places where these western wildflowers grow, I saw their slender stalks pregnant with the promise of blue but not quite ready to give birth.

Don't ask me why I thought camas would be blooming that particular day. It just felt like camas time. As I drove slowly past the valley pastures and drank in the smell of a late-afternoon rain shower, my thoughts turned to wildflowers and phenology. It was late April, after all. I couldn't remember when the camas began blooming last year, but it just felt like they should be coloring the hillsides this evening with their soft azure shades.

I paged through my journals, where I keep track of all manner of natural phenomena. My notebooks

Camas blooms in rural Adams County, south of Council, during the spring of 2004.



are filled with jottings about the first tundra swans to arrive at Ben Ross Reservoir during spring migration and the last mule deer sightings after winter snows have hushed the valley. I can tell you when the American goldfinches finished molting into their bumblebee black-and-yellow breeding plumage and when the narrow-leaf cottonwoods along the shore began sporting a fresh green cloak.

April 28, 2004: 46 degrees at noon, winds northwest at eight to twelve miles an hour. It's cloudy; the dark-bottomed cumulus promise another shower before nightfall.

The bitterbrush is blooming on Midvale Hill, the air redolent with its sticky perfume. Perhaps it is a difference in the soil or the aspect of that

of fruitless forays, as we do every spring, just absorbing the feel of new life in the woods, before we find that first crenulated morsel in the shade of a white-fir grove.

It seems I didn't record the opening of camas flowers last year. That started me thinking about phenology. No, it's not some New Age fad. Quite the contrary. Phenology has been practiced for ages. You probably do it yourself, year-in and year-out. You just never bothered to hang a name on the activity of watching for telltale signs of changing seasons. That's all phenology is: the study of biological phenomena, such as flowering, breeding and migration, in relation to climatic conditions. In other words, it's how you know when it's spring.

Phenology has been practiced for ages. You probably do it yourself, year-in and year-out. You just never bothered to hang a name on the activity of watching for telltale signs of changing seasons.

slope that allows the bushes to bloom there before the tiny yellow blossoms begin to appear on the bitterbrush near my house. I saw the first trillium poking up through the pine duff in the woods on Sunday evening, along with a few delicate yellow woods violets. My brother, the consummate woodsman, will remind me that once the trillium have appeared, it won't be long until we hunt the elusive morel mushrooms. Of course, we are over-eager to gather these gastronomical treats and will make a couple

Lewis and Clark would have been fabulous phenologists, had they stayed in one place long enough to witness the changing seasons. I marvel at the meticulous notes that fill their journals about the weather, plants, and animals they encountered on their journey up the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean and home again. From his observations of a single spring morning along the Missouri in 1804, Meriwether Lewis wrote well over a thousand words describing the characteristics and

behavior of the wildlife he saw: buffalo, geese, grizzly bears, pronghorn antelope, and coyotes, which Lewis referred to as "prairie wolves." In fact, the captains were the first Europeans to describe a host of species of the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and Pacific Northwest, including the mountain alder and western red cedar, mountain huckleberry, Steller's jay, blue grouse, spruce grouse, and ruffed grouse, and the greenish-black woodpecker with red face that we know today as Lewis's woodpecker. My journals do not reveal the feeling of kinship with my fellow phenologist that rouses me each time I spy his namesake flitting through the ponderosa pine forest near my home.

Tuesday, June 6th: Spotted a black-headed grosbeak in the narrow-leaf cottonwoods along the shore of the reservoir this morning. Found him through the spotting scope after hearing his unmistakable song. On my hike this evening, saw one black bear way at the top of King Hill Creek. He was small, probably a yearling, and he seemed to be cavorting like a kid on spring recess, tumbling and cartwheeling through a clearing at the edge of the trees. I just avoided stepping on a rattlesnake that lay curled at the edge of the path. What was he doing up in the cool timber where we didn't expect him? The dogs must have smelled him, because they gave him a wide berth before I heard his warning rattle. We were a little more watchful from that point on. Oh, and I saw a Lewis's woodpecker on King Hill and another

er along the Little Weiser River.

Lewis's scientific observations sometimes gave way to poetic rhapsody, as when he first laid eyes on the Weippe Prairie of northern Idaho awash with camas blossoms in June 1806 as the expedition paused on its homeward trek, waiting for the snows to leave the mountain passes: he wrote, using his phoneticized spelling of the Nez Perce word for camas, "and from the colour of its bloom at a short distance it resembles lakes of fine clear water, so complete is this despection that on first sight I could have sworn it was water."

"The quawmash is now in blume," [Lewis] wrote ... "and from the colour of its bloom at a short distance it resembles lakes of fine clear water, so complete is this despection that on first sight I could have sworn it was water."

RIGHT: *An Indian Valley camas field during the spring of 2004.*

OPPOSITE TOP: *Camus Trillium blooming in the Payette National Forest after a late spring snow shower.*

OPPOSITE MIDDLE: *Western Meadowlark nestlings in Indian Valley, early June 2004.*

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: *Arrowleaf Balsamroot on a hillside above the Little Weiser River in early April 2004.*

The Corps of Discovery's first impression of camas was not so favorable. As the party staggered out of the Bitterroot Mountains in late September 1805, the men were famished and exhausted. They had survived an eleven-day forced march over a little used trail, "Excessively bad & Thickly Strowed with falling timber . . . Steep & Stoney," Clark called it. Early snows had pushed the game out of the high country and the men found almost nothing to eat. "We wer compelled to kill a Colt . . . to eat and named the South fork Colt killed Creek," he noted. When they finally reached the broad plains, the Nez Perce whom they met there saved their lives, sharing stores of dried salmon and boiled camas roots. The starving explorers ate their fill, but the abrupt change in diet made the Corps members violently ill with diarrhea and vomiting for nearly a week. On their return trip the following spring, the men were able to

eat the camas roots without such dire consequences, but they never found the Nez Perce staple very appealing. "This root is pallateable," Lewis allowed, "but it disagrees with me in every shape I have ever used it."

Once the camas—among our early bloomers—have painted the moist places with their cerulean brush and the canvas has begun to fade, is spring then in full blush? Or is there some other benchmark that we ought to look for? Shall we go by buttercups, another harbinger of winter's retreat? That would mean that spring sneaked in here even before the vernal equinox. I discovered buttercups on my place March 11—about a week after folks reported seeing them in the lower meadows of Council Valley.

As for the vernal equinox, the day of "equal nights" really doesn't tell us a thing about our local seasons. The equinox is simply the hour at which the sun crosses the celestial



phenology notebook



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equator, that imaginary line across the heavens that corresponds to our terrestrial equator. At that point, in theory, every place on earth experiences exactly twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness.

According to astronomers, the spring of 2004 officially arrived here in west-central Idaho at 6 p.m. on March 20. Did you notice? Neither did the plants and critters.

Speaking of critters, maybe we ought to trust them to let us know that it's spring. When the deer and elk return from their winter range to take advantage of green-up in the foothills of Indian Valley, then is it spring? How about when the first meadowlark appears on a fence post, belting out his optimistic melody? Or when the steelhead season gives way to spring chinook on the Salmon River?

Monday, May 5th: 38 degrees, calm and partly cloudy at 7:30 a.m.

As I step out the bedroom door onto the deck to count birds on the reservoir, I'm greeted by the crowing of an unseen rooster pheasant advertising himself to prospective mates. California quail call from the neigh-

bor's hay field. I count 212 western grebes on the reservoir, a new record. Sixty-two ruddy ducks cluster near the middle of the lake, and a male bufflehead trails behind a pair of his kin. Must be discouraging to be a third wheel this time of year. The eared grebes have not yet selected mates; seven males and six females conduct their comical courting routine in the shallow water near my shoreline. One pair swim so close together that their wings touch and they float along as one, alternately dipping their heads in quick preening moves. They lower their heads in unison and chase away an interloper, even rising on their butts

and paddling rapidly after him until he gets the message that he's unwanted. Meanwhile another pair interrupt their preening to rise up, chest-to-chest, briefly pressing white breasts together in an eared grebe pas de deux.

Perhaps you prefer subtler seasonal messengers, like morel mushrooms tentatively poking up from their winter beds among fallen fir needles. Those delectable fungi, though, depend more on fire ecology and the amount of moisture they receive than on the passage of time that we note on the calendar. Morel season may come early or late, depending on how much snow we

LEFT: Kyle Batt and Dian Scott show off a few of the morel mushrooms they picked in the Payette National Forest, Memorial Day weekend, 2004.

OPPOSITE LEFT TO RIGHT: Springtime camas in Adams County; Greater Sage Grouse males photographed in Washington County near leks [animal courting grounds] where males strut and display to attract females during the breeding season.





Perhaps you prefer subtler seasonal messengers, like morel mushrooms tentatively poking up from their winter beds among fallen fir needles.

had, whether the spring rains came, and even the elevation at which we hunt for the shy mycological treasure.

May 22nd: Overcast with rain showers early this morning; the rain gauge has recorded .18 inches by 9:00 a.m.; 50 degrees.

The snipe are back, flying around the valley making that unique whistling sound with their wings. The slope on the far side of the reservoir is a virtual carpet of bold yellow mule's ears, and the locust trees are finally beginning to bud. Brother Dave and I drove to the site of last summer's wildfire on East Fork in search of mushrooms. In forty-five minutes, I picked about a third of a bag—the red mesh bag that once held ten pounds of oranges—on the steep slope above the gushing tributary. Fresh bear tracks let me know that we weren't the only pickers among the blackened tree trunks. Dave had

hiked farther up the ridge where the fire burned hotter. No 'shrooms up there, just ash and mud. He spooked a ruffed grouse that alighted on a branch right above my head, and I wondered if Lewis and Clark sent one of the forest bird's ancestors to President Jefferson two hundred years ago.

Spring might not send us such a distinctive calling card as mating birds or bursting buds or mushrooms suddenly pushing up through the woodland soil. My neighbor and Indian Valley native, Scotti Yantis, may have hit it on the nose. "It's a smell and a feel," she explained, which made me feel less foolish about my hunch that it was camas time. "And the birds' songs sound different, as if to say we can put our winter boots away."

Wendy Green lives in Indian Valley.

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Jun-Oct Farmer's Markets open around Idaho

10 WBCA BBQ Kick-Off, Wallace
 10 Logging Events, Bonners Ferry
 10-11 School 's Out for the Summer Party & Regatta, Montpelier
 11 Kids Free Day Fishing, Kooskia
 11 Paint the Town, Boise
 11 Sheep Show & Sale, Coeur d'Alene
 11 2005 Spudman Triathlon, Boise
 11 Paint the Town, Meridian
 11 Trent Arterberry, Mime, Storytelling & Puppetry, Twin Falls
 11-12 Fiddle Fest, Post Falls
 12 Post Falls Duathlon, Post Falls
 13 Annual Cherry Festival, Emmett
 13-8/28 Silver Creek Free Casting Clinic, Ketchum
 14-15 "The Taming of the Shrew," Play, Boise
 15 Alive After Five, Wednesday evenings, Idaho Falls
 15 "Beyond the Looking Glass," Regional Artists, Priest Lake
 15-8/17 Summer Matinees for Children, Moscow
 15-18 Dairy Days, Meridian
 16-18 Gyro Days/Lead Creek Derby, Wallace
 17-18 American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, Lewiston
 17-21 Car d'Iane Downtown Classic Car Show, Coeur d'Alene
 17-21 ArtWalk, Galleries Downtown, Sandpoint
 18 Scenic River Classic, Idaho Falls
 18 Pig-Out in the Park, Harrison
 18 Barn Sour Run, Meridian
 18 I Made the Grade Ride, Lewiston
 18 AARP Idaho Grandparents Day, Pocatello
 18 Spiritfest: A Christian Music Celebration, Coeur d'Alene
 18 City/County Auction, Coeur d'Alene
 18 AutoSwap Meet, Coeur d'Alene
 18 Shriners Circus, Coeur d'Alene
 18 2005 Kiwanis Fun Run/Walk, Emmett
 18 White Bird Days & Rodeo, White Bird
 18 Lead Creek Breakfast, Mullan
 19 "Dynamic Dads Day" Celebration Zoo Boise, Boise
 19 Demolition Derby, Coeur d'Alene
 19-25 Old Time Fiddler Contest, Weiser
 19-8/28 Ste Chapelle Winery Jazz Series, Caldwell
 21 Bridge the Years/Ride the Wall, Enaville
 21 Lewis & Clark Lecture Series, Botanical Garden, Boise
 21 Along the River Free Summer Concerts, Idaho Falls
 21-28 Evening Bird Walks with Local Bird Experts, Sun Valley
 22-8/31 Join Local Naturalist for Harriman Trail Walks, Ketchum
 23 Lewis-Clark State Symposium, Lewiston
 23-25 Newport Rodeo, Newport
 23-25 Annual Girls' Fast-Pitch Softball Tournament, Montpelier
 23-26 Idaho Regatta, Burley
 23-7/2 "1776" presented by Music Theatre of Idaho, Nampa
 24 Relay for Life, Idaho Falls
 24-26 Summer Splash Boat Show, Lewiston
 24-26 "Spirit of Boise Balloon Classic," Boise
 25 Mount Misery Run, Lewiston
 25 Newport Rodeo, Newport
 25 Pizza Run Car Show, Soda Springs
 25 Frontier Music Festival, Kooskia

25 Great Spud Race, Family Activities, Games, Rexburg
 25 Pride, Community/City Clean-up, Beautification, Rexburg
 25 VFW & Auxiliary Community BBQ Potluck, Grangeville
 25 Habitat for Humanity Pig Roast, Pinehurst
 25-7/9 Bugs & Butterflies: Nature Walk, Ketchum
 26 Ironman Coeur d'Alene Triathlon, Coeur d'Alene
 26 Heritage Court Coronation Ceremony, Hailey
 26-27 Bonners Ferry Rodeo, Bonners Ferry
 26-7/1 Life on Wheels Recreational Vehicle Conference, Moscow
 27 Hill's 58th Anniversary Golf Tournament, Priest Lake
 28-8/23 "Ketch'em Alive" Free Summer Concert Series, Ketchum
 28-10/3 "The Ross Hall Collection," B&W Photography, Priest Lake
 28 Concert in the Park, Post Falls
 29 Festara 2005, Jalaidi, Boise
 29 God & Country Rally, Nampa
 30 Whoopee Days Talent Show, Rexburg
 30 Georgia O'Keeffe Visions of the Sublime Exhibit, Boise
 30-7/4 4th of July Celebration, Rupert

july

1 ATV Fun Run Dust Devils, Elk City
 1 Whoopee Days Golf Scramble, Rexburg
 1-3 Warm Springs Village Antique Show, Ketchum
 1-4 Teton Valley Summer Balloon Festival, Driggs
 2-4 Salmon River Days, Lemhi & Salmon
 2-4 Hailey Antique Market, Hailey
 4 4th of July Holiday Rodeo, Hailey
 4 Whoopee Days 4th of July Freedom Run, Rexburg
 4 Annual Ice Cream Social, Priest Lake
 4 Silver Valley 4th of July County Fair, Pinehurst
 4 Whoopee Days Rodeo & Fireworks, Rexburg
 4 4th of July Celebration & Chuckwagon Breakfast, Paris
 4 "Fireworks in the Mountains," Elk River
 4-10 Live Melodrama, Wallace
 6 The Great Race, Pocatello
 7-9 Pend Oreille Pioneer Weekend, Priest River
 8-9 Crazy Days, Wallace
 8-8/6 Mary Farrell's Printmaking Displayed, Coeur d'Alene
 9 Whoopee Days Demolition Derby, Rexburg
 9 Market Lake Days, Roberts
 10 Historic Skills Fair, Cataldo
 10 Logging Events, Bonners Ferry

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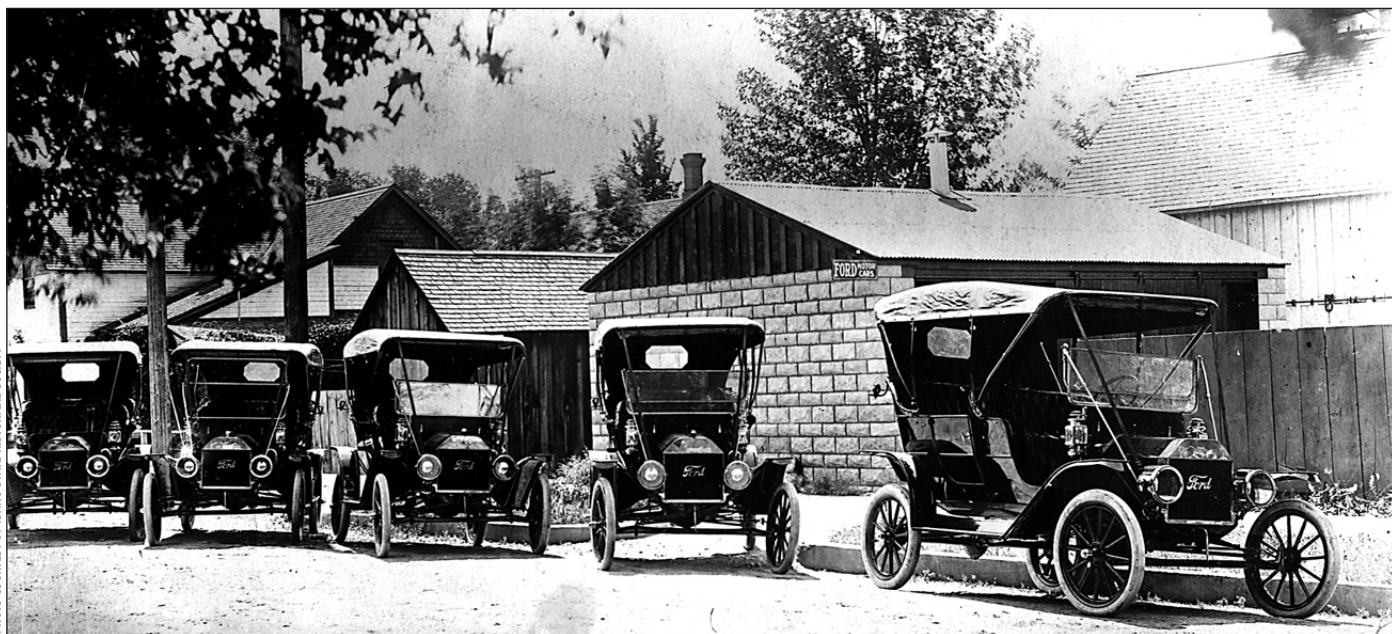
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Built Boise-Tough

By Arthur Hart

In June, 1915, when our historical snapshot was taken, the speed limit was twenty miles per hour and gasoline was twenty cents a gallon. In August, automobiles were admitted to Yellowstone National Park for the first time. An *Idaho Statesman* headline read: "Admission of Motor Cars a Success. No Accidents or Trouble Result from Their Entrance to Yellowstone." Many of the Idahoans who toured the park that summer were driving Model T Fords like the ones shown above.

Henry Ford began producing his famous Model T in 1909, but it was the 1914 model that revolutionized the automobile industry. It was the first car mass-produced on an assembly line by workers paid the unheard of sum of five dollars a

day, plus a share of the profits, for an eight-hour work day.

Thousands clamored to get jobs at Ford. The assembly line was a new concept, now used universally in all kinds of manufacturing. Model T Fords could be put together eight times faster than the hand-built earlier models where each mechanic performed many tasks instead of just one.

The shiny new 1914 Model Ts in our photograph were assembled not in Detroit, but in Boise. H.H. Bryant, who had owned the Ford dealership in Boise for several years, was married to Henry Ford's sister. In 1914 Bryant started a small assembly line, putting together cars from parts shipped to Idaho on the railroad. We surmise that this his-

toric snapshot was taken to commemorate the first batch of Model Ts built in Boise.

True to Henry Ford's dictum that customers could have "any color as long as it's black," these five beauties are black, but highlighted and ornamented with a gleaming brass radiator with the Ford logo in the center and four shiny brass headlamps. The diagonal braces supporting the windshield are another hallmark of the famous 1914, one of the all-time classics in automobile history. The Model T would revolutionize the American lifestyle, putting ownership of an automobile within the reach of the average family.

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

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