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features

cover story!

12 It Happened To Sun Valley

As Sun Valley celebrates its 75th ski season, discover the story of how it all began.

By Van Gordon Sauter & Jennifer Tuohy

20 A Conversation with Peter Duchin

Reminiscences from one of the last links to the original Sun Valley family.

By Van Gordon Sauter

22 Hunting: Carving a Path in the New West

Will hunting's heritage ensure its survival in a society increasingly opposed to its methods?

By Jason Kauffman



12

The cover image is a re-creation of this, the first image used to market Sun Valley in 1936.

departments

recreation

28 Harnessing the Winter Winds

Snowkiting soars on the Camas Prairie.

By Greg Moore

arts

32 The Idaho Bookshelf

From the esoteric to the classic, perfect picks to expand your Idaho understanding.

By Van Gordon Sauter



28

regulars

10 Valley View

Celebrate 75 seasons of skiing.

By Evelyn Phillips

41 Gear Up

New innovations for winter sports.

By Greg Moore

42 Sun Valley Social

Relive who you missed this summer.

By Willy Cook & David N. Seelig

34 The Guide

34 Dining guide

38 Winter Calendar

40 Sun Valley Essentials

40 Sun Valley Adventures

40 Equipment rentals

40 Outfitters

40 Lodging



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from the editor

The idea of putting a semi-naked young gentleman on the cover of the *Sun Valley Guide* is not one I had ever entertained.

But when the incomparable Van Gordon Sauter mentioned Steve Hannagan to me, saying, "We should look into him; I don't think his story has really been told," I was started down a path that led to re-creating one of skiing's most iconic images for our cover.

It was 1936, in a Manhattan photographer's studio. A model stood on a pair of wooden skis, stripped to the waist, tasked with appearing as if he had just hurtled down a winter slope under a scorching Idaho sun. With the help of a tub of Vaseline to simulate sweat and a white sheet to simulate snow, the image taken that day became the face of America's first destination ski resort, Sun Valley.

Seventy-four years later in a small studio in Ketchum, Idaho, a model (the valiant Jon Duval, a Sun Valley Suns hockey player) stood on a pair of antique 1930s skis. As he gripped the handles of Otto Lang's ski poles and smiled doggedly into the lens of Paulette Philipot's Nikon, art director Tony Barriatua sprinkled Epsom salt on his skis and a pregnant editor-in-chief plastered Vaseline on his torso.

Three hours later, the task was complete. In honor of Sun Valley Resort's 75th ski season, the *Sun Valley Guide* team had successfully re-created that original iconic image, the brainchild of Steve Hannagan, the resort's first publicity director.

Found now only in historical footnotes and asides, Hannagan was a key player in creating the Sun Valley we know today. He originated the aura of wealth, celebrity, style, glamour and excellent skiing that has characterized Sun Valley for seven and a half decades. Discover how he did it in *It Happened To Sun Valley*, page 12.

Sun Valley Resort is entering a new phase of its history, and as it ponders how to make the next 75 years as prosperous as the first, it would be wise to reflect upon the successes (and failures) of one of the men who started it all. As my fellow countryman Winston Churchill put it, "If we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall have lost the future."

Jennifer Tuohy, Editor-in-Chief
editor@sunvalleyguide.com



PHOTO BY PAULETTE PHILIPOT

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Capitol Law Group is proud to introduce Jim Donovan as the newest member of the firm. Jim brings 25 years of experience as both an attorney and CPA to the new Sun Valley/Ketchum office.

Over the course of his career, Jim has focused on helping small and medium sized businesses as well as handling family law. However, Jim also has a wealth of experience in real estate, government matters, administrative law and civil litigation.

Jim's two years of working here in Ketchum as the CFO of a local real estate group and his efforts in running for the Idaho Senate, have given him a broad knowledge of the region. He looks forward to providing a local feel to a firm with extensive experience in a variety of matters.

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**COVER: JON DUVAL BY PAULETTE PHLIPOT
STYLING BY TONY BARRIATUA**

A re-creation of the 1936 image used in Sun Valley's first marketing campaign. Jon is wearing Leif Odmark's sweater and holding Otto Lang's ski poles. Wardrobe supplied by Heritage & Ski Museum.

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1st place, General Excellence
 1st place, Web Site General Excellence
 1st & 2nd place, Serious Feature
 1st & 2nd place, Light Feature

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75 SKIING *seasons of*

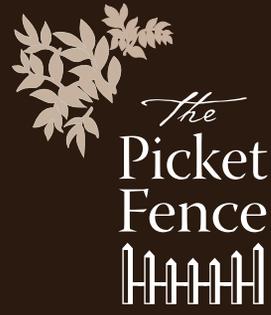
The original character of Sun Valley, first imagined 75 years ago, still thrives today. The technologies of skiing may have transformed beyond all recognition, but Sun Valley's style has been constant. As Averell Harriman put it, "We didn't run it to make money. We ran it to be a perfect place." And what a perfect place it is. Take a moment to reconnect with that glamorous past; it's why we have a future.

- 1 Sun Valley Lodge:** Stop in and peruse the sparkling history of the lodge and its celebrity visitors in the Hallway of Stars.
- 2 Dollar Mountain:** One of the original ski mountains opens the season with a new jump line and 25 new rails, boxes and jibs. Combined with the Lunar Eclipse Rail Jam series, Dollar is sure to be a hot spot this year.
- 3 First Chairlifts:** Proctor, Dollar and Ruud mountains are the sites of the world's first chairlifts. The first two went up on Proctor and Dollar in 1936. The third, erected on Ruud in 1937, is the only one still standing.
- 4 The Gondola:** From a "chair-type lift" in 1936 to a state-of-the-art capsule in the sky, even non-skiers should hop in and take a ride up to the historic Roundhouse, America's oldest ski lodge, which opened the same year as Bald Mountain, 1939.
- 5 Sun Valley Ice Rink:** Also celebrating its 75th season, the ice rink hosts Olympic medalists Evan Lysacek, Sasha Cohen, Brian Boitano on Dec. 21, the date Sun Valley Lodge opened in 1936.
- 6 Trail Creek Cabin:** For a truly traditional experience, take a horse-drawn sleigh to the rustic cabin for dinner, following in the sleigh tracks of Claudette Colbert, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable and many more.
- 7 Heritage & Ski Museum:** Bone up on the history of Sun Valley, skiing, Hemingway and the area's railroad, ranching and mining heritage.
- 8 Sun Valley Inn:** U.S. Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame comes to Sun Valley March 28 - April 3 for a celebration of 75 seasons of skiing and the induction of six new members into the Hall of Fame, including Sun Valley Resort's own Earl Holding and Ketchum's Paralympic medalist Muffy Davis.

See Calendar (page 38) for more details on all events and activities this winter in Sun Valley.

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IT HAPPENED TO SUN VALLEY

70
YEARS

AGO,

a wealthy East Coast businessman and an upstart publicist from Indiana had a dream: to create and promote the most luxurious winter sports resort America, and the world, had ever known.

Van Gordon Sauter and **Jennifer Tuohy** reveal how they did it.



Averell Harriman (left) and publicity consultant Steve Hannagan in 1936, observing their dream becoming a reality.

Photo courtesy Sun Valley Resort Archives



BROCHURE COURTESY THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY, REGIONAL HISTORY DEPARTMENT, KETCHUM, ID

IT'S THE MOST **ICONIC** PHOTO IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN SKIING.

It depicts a smiling young man, handsome and trim, standing tall in his 1930s

snow pants atop boots and skis, his poles elegantly draped as he pauses from his obvious exertions to wipe the hard-earned sweat from his brow. But the focal center of the photo is the skin—the man is bare-chested. Shirtless. Apparently perfectly comfortable—in the snow!

Obviously, he is not suffering in one of those glaciated Northeastern states, where panicky skiers hurtle down steep ice sheets, generally out of control, toward frigid snow huts with clunky transport into priggish Calvinist hamlets with all the amenities of an Inuit village in the Northwest Territory.

Instead, the image conjures up a sophisticated, handsome man in a place of beauty, surrounded by snow, yet warm enough to savor the midday sun.

Gracing the cover of the first Sun Valley Lodge brochure in 1936, and the posters that promoted nationwide what was to become the ultimate American destination ski resort, this shirtless skier quickly became the face of Sun Valley.

In fact, the young man and his sweat-drenched torso never set foot in the snow. The iconic image was shot in a New York studio, the sweat courtesy of a tub of Vaseline. It was the self-professed masterpiece of publicist Steven Hannagan, who had achieved fame by staging the pictures, stunts and stories that transformed the reputation of a once irrelevant, insect-infested island off Miami, Florida, into the



Sun Valley Lodge's first brochure (top), displayed the fine figure of a sweat-drenched skier promoting the unique combination of winter sports under a summer sun. The hugely successful campaign was devised by Steve Hannagan (above in 1951 on Baldy lift #2) who hated the cold, never skied and was a master of manipulative imagery. Photo courtesy Sun Valley Resort Archives

incandescent Miami Beach. His successful promotion of that gaudy, expensive playground for thousands of sun lovers and sybarites who spent most of the year in sooty Northern cities shoveling leaden snow and sliding off slick roadways into filthy snow banks, gave Hannagan the building blocks to create Sun Valley.

Averell Harriman, the wealthy, magisterial chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad, knew Hannagan's skills were critical to the success of the ski resort he was plunking down in the seriously cold outback of Idaho.

Idaho and Hannagan—like Harriman and Hannagan—were an implausible couple. Hannagan abhorred the cold, detested snow (“I don’t think he skied at all,” recalled Harriman), and considered isolated Ketchum a wearisome

and bleak outpost at that point where the maps go blank and adjacent space was populated by voracious, fire-snorting dragons.

Harriman was the ultimate patrician, a scion of wealth and privilege, an industrialist and financier who would go on to the highest councils of American leadership and two of the nation’s most important ambassadorships (England and Russia).

Hannagan was a no-name native of Indiana, a man with an instinctive and income-generating sense of what engaged and motivated the public. With smarts, an engaging personality and a strong dash of chutzpah, he became a living legend of public relations. A born flack.

And it worked. Before 1936 there was no Sun Valley, only the obscure and isolated former mining towns of Ketchum, Hailey and Bellevue. Hannagan immediately realized the resort needed its own name.

As he stood in the “godforsaken fields of

snow” he was tasked to publicize, he found himself breaking a sweat in spite of his flimsy three-piece tweed suit. Removing first his jacket, then his vest (his shoes still filled with snow), inspiration hit. The image of the stripped-to-the-waist skier danced into his mind and immediately (he claims) he knew the resort would be called Sun Valley and he would sell it to the world as “Winter sports under a summer sun.”

Hannagan quickly impressed upon Harriman that his resort had to rise above the perception of being just another ski mountain like those in New Hampshire or Vermont or Massachusetts. It had to have European cachet, smart people, vivacious celebrities and an elegant ease that would motivate people to travel by train across the country in mid winter to an isolated town where flat land vanished and all roads went uphill.

Harriman created his resort to boost passenger traffic on his rail line, which passed east-to-west through Shoshone, connecting north to the Wood River Valley by a branch line originally established to haul ore from the mines. And after the mines went bust, the spur hauled to market the tens of thousands of sheep fattened in mountain pastures. Passengers on the branch line had accommodations only slightly more gracious than those experienced by the sheep. The cars were ramshackle, and during the winter travelers were lucky to be in a car with a wood stove.

“This is one city in which roughing it must be a luxury.”

Steve Hannagan

SUN VALLEY OPENS WITH A

... AND A MANHATTAN

The Sun Valley Lodge opening-night banquet took place not only during the Depression but in a rural state where many residents—a significant number of whom gathered their food from the fields and mountains and streams—would have been befuddled by the ostentatious Gallic menu. It included: Beef tea des Viveurs, Paillettes Dorees, Ananas Surprise Union Pacifique and Frivolites Americaines.

Those options certainly would have stumped the “gee whiz” guests from Pocatello (there were 20 in attendance), but also the Hollywood moguls, who numbered 23, and the lay-about trust-funders with their elegant women. Almost everyone, however, would have been familiar with the before-dinner cocktail: The Manhattan.

When a Chicago investment banker was decked by a punch from future *Gone With the Wind*-producer David O. Selznick, the resort management immediately presumed the grand opening to be a calamity, a dignified soiree reduced to a pathetic barroom brawl by some vulgar-ians with rented tuxes. Hardly.

The editor of the *Hailey Times*, the county weekly, never even mentioned the fight. His bubbly account reminded the Blaine County provincials that “seven months ago a small valley lay basking in the sun in peace and quietude ... nameless ... with very little of



PHOTO COURTESY SUN VALLEY RESORT ARCHIVES

Gary Cooper & Claudette Colbert in Sun Valley in the 1940s.

manmade things to mar its tranquility. Monday evening, December 21, the whole world heard music, speaking and sounds of revelry, broadcast from a mammoth hotel that now stands majestically in the heart of what is now known to the world as Sun Valley.”

Obviously, the world did not hear the bloodied Chicago investment banker crashing to the floor and women shrieking with horror. Someone called Steve Hannagan with the story of anguish from the presumably besmirched dinner. “What do you mean your party’s ruined?” Hannagan shouted. “Not an editor in the country can resist this story.” Then Hannagan sat down and wrote what became the memorable party headline for the ages: “Sun Valley Opens With a Bang.”

The *Hailey Times* editor not only missed the story, he made another step into provincial backwater geography. He declared that the hotel was opened by a formal dinner attended by a goodly representation of Idaho people and guests from the “Far East.” The Idaho sense of geography did not imply that the Sun Valley diners were fed rice or the women wore kimonos. To a lot of Idaho residents of the day, Omaha, the center of the Union Pacific Railroad, was decidedly East. And anything east of Omaha, including Chicago and New York, were Far East.

Life Magazine, certainly emanating from the Far, Far East, noted that the lodge opened “with as fancy a crew of rich socialites as have ever been assembled under one roof in the U.S.” They got that right. Harriman and Hannagan had thrown an epic party for their resort. And with the exception of a Chicago banker, it was a joy for all.



Hannagan's idea to have "mechanical devices... to take people to the top," takes shape at Union Pacific headquarters in Omaha.



Importing the success of Hannagan's Miami Beach bathing beauties campaign to a wintry Idaho proved a highly successful, if surprising, ploy.



The ill-tempered and hungry reindeer, which Hannagan and Harriman brought in to add North Pole ambiance, grazing out Trail Creek.



Ski school head Sigi Engl takes Gary Cooper and Clark Gable down Dollar Mountain. Celebrities were key to the publicity plan, and they were game, particularly once Hannagan told them if they posed for pictures, they could write off the trip on their taxes.

PHOTOS COURTESY SUN VALLEY RESORT ARCHIVES

Hannagan felt that anything less than first class was no class and set out to upgrade everything, from the transport to the access for the ski mountain, from the quality of the food to the modishness of the Duchin Room repartee.

To detail this, Hannagan sat down on March 28, 1936, two days after first laying eyes on Idaho's mountains, and wrote a remarkably visionary two-page memo to Harriman specifying the elements that could make Sun Valley a successful product for the railroad and a memorable experience for guests. Hannagan's suggestions were embraced by Harriman.

Among them were these concepts, which were transformed into reality and in most cases are with us today:

- "This is one city in which roughing it must be a luxury. It may seem to be isolated, rustic, continental. But it must have every modern convenience."
- "There should be an ice skating rink. There should be a glass walled but open ceiling hot water pool ... Imagine swimming pictures and diving pictures with snowcapped mountains as background ..."
- "People like to leave the hotel. Nearby there might be a billiard parlor. And a bowling alley. And certainly a motion picture show. Undoubtedly the town of Ketchum will perk up."
- "Mechanical devices must be installed to take people to the top of the mountain. This seems imperative."
- "Undoubtedly someplace nearby will serve unusual food. Perhaps the taxi to this location [which became Trail Creek] will be a sleigh."
- "It will be necessary to make it nationally known quickly ... This needs to be done with unusual pictures showing the unusual climate of Idaho ... skiing in shirts skinned to the waist, bathing ... in the open. If society people or celebrities are attractive enough and elastic enough to be models in these pictures—well, good."

As a biographer of Harriman noted, "Hannagan's gusher of suggestions became the blueprint" for Sun Valley. Indeed, the Union Pacific's engineering department in Omaha transformed American skiing forever by responding to Hannagan's insistence for a device to "lift" skiers to the top of the runs. Their inspiration: the hoist used to load stalks of bananas aboard fruit boats. Only for Sun Valley they imagined suspended chairs that would transport skiers, instead of bananas, along a moving cable. And transport them as gently as ripe fruit from Central America.

Perhaps most important, Hannagan moved Harriman away from the concept of a quaint lodge (tentatively named something like The

Ketchum Inn) of 100 rooms. He successfully argued for a million-dollar resort housing 250 guest rooms. He insisted that the facility, while looking traditional, must be invested with the conveniences and sophistication common to the best hotels.

A key ingredient for establishing the chic image was celebrities. And nifty women in bathing suits. And Olympic stars on the slopes. And the monied families of Cincinnati and Denver and Memphis and other second-tier cities across America. Those families would be invited to Sun Valley and photographed cavorting in the pool or on the mountain or bundled in fur on a romantic sleigh trip through the forest. Those photos would then appear in the local newspapers, inspiring every other Park Avenue housewife in town to advise her startled husband, "We're heading to Sun Valley."

"It is my opinion," concluded Hannagan's memo to Harriman, "Sun Valley can be made into an exclusive winter sports resort which will capture the interest of all America, and become the trademark of everything that is winter sports just as Florida has become synonymous with a summer vacation in winter."

With remarkable speed, and fundamentally inexhaustible funds (the final cost of the lodge alone reached \$1.5 million), the lodge and related facilities were rushed to completion. It took mere months rather than years. The achievement is even more impressive considering the isolation of Ketchum and the staggering logistics of bringing virtually everything from carpets to ski poles to brandy snifters and fresh shrimp to the innards of Idaho.

All the planning and publicity and construction concluded with a star and celebrity who's who of an opening night dinner. It was said that Clark Gable's bags were carried into the lodge at the same moment the last workman exited the back door (incidentally, a laborer earned 43 cents an hour during construction; a skilled carpenter 75 cents an hour). Everything, everyone, was in place for the opening but one critical

“Mechanical devices must be installed to take people to the top of the mountain. This seems imperative.”
Steve Hannagan



Baldy's Steilberg Traverse (now Rock Garden) pictured from The Roundhouse door, December 26, 1941.

DEVOTED TO BALDY

BY MICHAEL AMES

Although Bald Mountain's first lifts didn't open until December 23, 1939, Sun Valley guests tackled its steep slopes that first season using the services of the resort's snowcat. The locals slapped on skins and walked up, as they had always done. Here, committed Baldy devotees explain its irresistible pull.

"I first saw Sun Valley when I was 14 years old after an all-night drive from Reno, Nevada. It was love at first sight and love, you know, is irrational. The 1953 moguls on Exhibition were the most beautiful, exciting sight I'd ever seen. It was love at first vision, me and Bald Mountain, a long-standing love affair that persists to this day."

Dick Dorworth is the author of Night Driving and The Perfect Turn: Tales of Skiing and Skiers. He lives in Ketchum.

"What makes Baldy so good is the town beneath it. It's all right here; excellent skiing in a beautiful mountain town with fine people. Where else can you have a world-class skiing experience on your lunch break?"

X-games medalist and U.S. Ski Team alumni Zach Crist lives in Ketchum.

"Baldy: It's not the steepest or the longest, but it is the most consistent and that is what sets it apart from every other place I've skied—it's just fall-line skiing all the way, from top to bottom. And what that does is it requires a lot of strength. If you ski on Baldy, you get strong. When you get strong you can take that to other places like Alaska or wherever you might be going. It's a great foundation for being a strong skier, which is why I believe so many great skiers come out of this area."

Ten-year member of the U.S. Ski Team, Reggie Crist is an Olympic downhill ski racer and a pioneer of Ski Cross.

"My attachment to Baldy is that that's where it all began for me. I've made a career and a life out of my snowboarding, and it all began at Baldy."

Snowboarder Graham Watanabe has multiple World Cup wins, an X-Games medal, and two Olympic berths to his credit, so far.

"My irrational devotion to Baldy displaced my earlier vision of hieing myself off to Las Vegas and morphing into a high-stepping showgirl. I'm glad Baldy won. My leggy years are long gone, but every fall I still keep a close watch for its first dusting of snow when I squint and make it deep and see myself cavorting there."

Betty Bell moved to Sun Valley in 1946 from Omaha, Nebraska and competed in the 1952 winter Olympics in Oslo, Norway.

"I fell in love with Bald Mountain in 1947, the first time I put some sealskins on my long wooden skis and climbed up River Run. When we got to the top and looked up Exhibition it was more than I could imagine. Eventually Baldy would be documented by my cameras from 1952 almost every winter for the next 40. What is not to love about Baldy? Back in those days the three single lifts only hauled 426 people an hour to the top so we could ski in the powder for days at a time. With no lift on Warm Springs we made the last run of the day down there in untracked powder top to bottom!"

Warren Miller is a legendary ski filmmaker, athlete, cartoonist and writer.

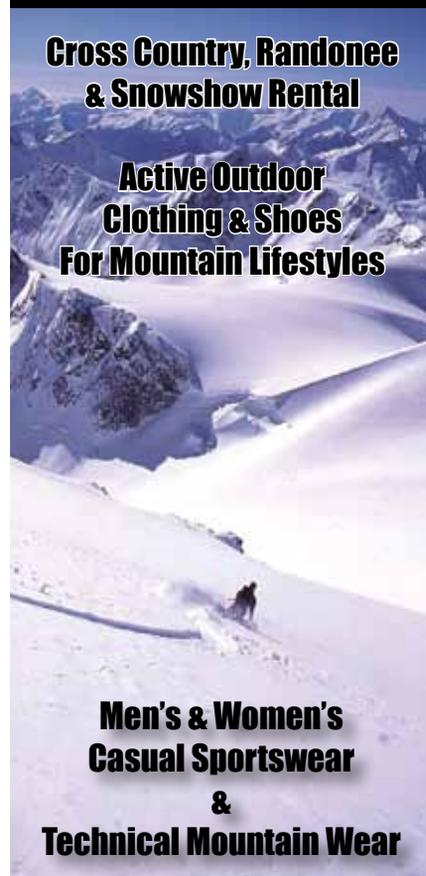


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component: snow! A few inches had fallen but were quickly washed away by a warm rain. Opening day, December 21, 1936, revealed dry, dusty ski runs and acres of banal sage brush. The initially baffled, then increasingly annoyed guests, began calling the winter resort the Ketchum Con. Harriman promptly declared that guests stayed free (rooms were priced from \$8 to \$24) and ate free until the first credible snow. Hannagan immediately imported more studio starlets from Hollywood.

The grand opening
of Sun Valley
was a **blacktie**,
Idaho version
of Dempsey-Tunney.

Sun Valley got a major publicity boost at the gala opening dinner. The whole crew for the Paramount film, *I Met Him In Paris*, starring Claudette Colbert and Melvyn Douglas, was on site to shoot some scenes representing Switzerland (the design for the original Challenger Inn, now the Sun Valley Inn, was based on the film's exterior design for the facade of a Swiss Inn).

Colbert, a significant star, was at a table with her husband and famed producer David O. Selznick. At some point a Chicago banker (best known for commissioning a Frank Lloyd Wright house just outside Lake Forest) approached Ms. Colbert for a dance. Something went amiss. And then the assemblage of the rich and famous witnessed a scene more common to Saturday night in a Butte, Montana, miner's bar: a fist fight.

Selznick took umbrage at whatever was said to the elegant Ms. Colbert. And the banker was promptly decked by a punch that produced spurts of blood. The crowd was horrified. Harriman, hearing of the event, was aghast. Hannagan, of course, was ecstatic. His hacks were flogged to the phones to call every paper in America: The grand opening of Sun Valley was a black tie, Idaho version of Dempsey-Tunney. The bloody brawl over a film star's honor was in columns everywhere. There is no evidence Hannagan staged the event.



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He certainly didn't stage the reindeer debacle. Harriman and Hannagan decided to import reindeer and an Eskimo handler to add a North Pole ambiance to their scene. Reindeer eat moss, not available in Blaine County. The beasts rejected Idaho alfalfa and were literally starving. Union Pacific dispatched a carload of moss from the frozen north, which arrived just after the surly animals, facing death, reluctantly started downing alfalfa. That escalated their inherently abominable disposition. Nervous and ill-tempered, they would abruptly turn on the guests, and when pulling a sleigh could inexplicably initiate a suicidal stampede toward cliffs and creeks.

Finally, one night a reindeer-powered sleigh delivered St. Nick to the big festive tree in front of the lodge. As Santa descended from the sleigh and delivered his enthusiastic "Ho, ho, ho" for a throng of enraptured guests, a reindeer lowered its antlers and attacked. St. Nick went into full flight, bag and all, pursued by an enraged reindeer and a hapless Eskimo. The reindeer were banished from the Harriman-Hannagan playbook.

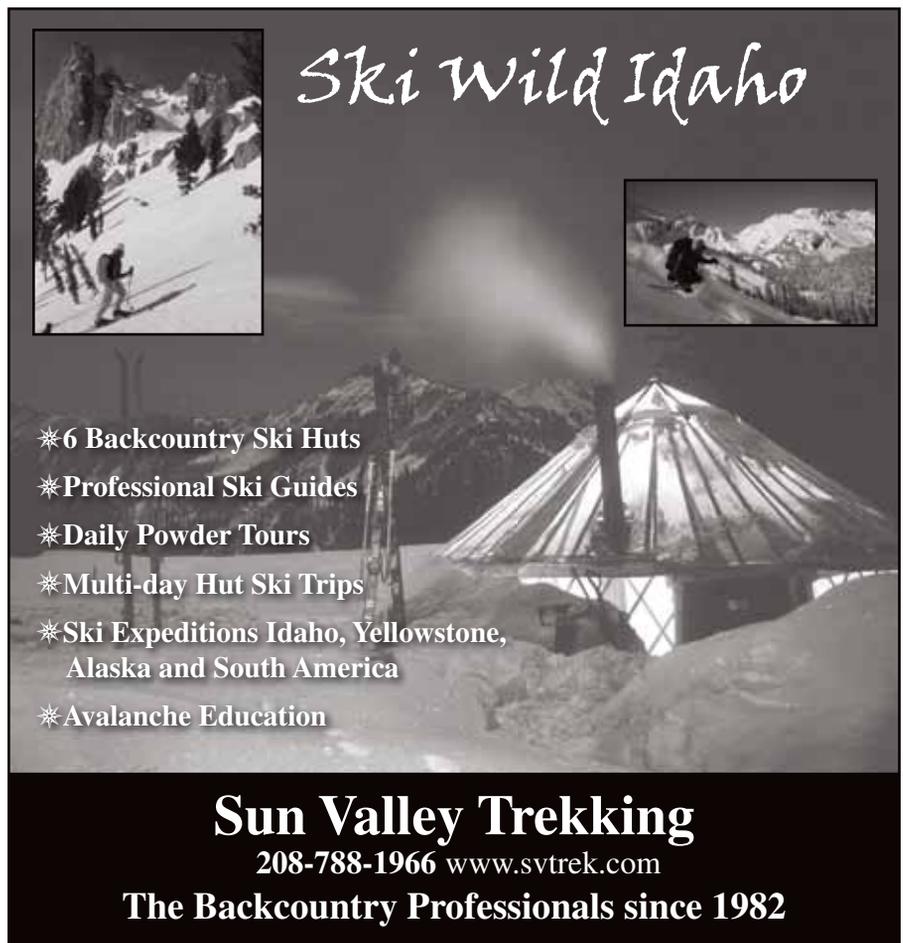
But they were an isolated misstep. Sun Valley, under Hannagan's skill and Harriman's management, thrived.

Hannagan went on from Sun Valley to create a major public relations agency with international ties. While he had some terminally pompous blue-chip clients, few things gave him more joy than bathing beauties (even those getting "ice tans" in Sun Valley) and great image campaigns, such as one to convince the American people that heavyweight champ Gene Tunney was a Shakespearean scholar.

He died in 1953 in Nairobi while on a project for Coca-Cola. It was a long way from the snow and success of Sun Valley and the surprisingly productive creative relationship with Averell Harriman. Yet nearly 75 years ago, they brought forth a great American enterprise based on a bare-chested male model, celebrities, engineering innovations, a great ski mountain, a hurricane of home-town photos, a keen sense of class, and, of course, a dab of sweat. Whatever it all was, the 1936 Hannagan memo laid it out. It was the Rosetta Stone. Sun Valley Resort emerged and the Wood River Valley came alive.

Today, Harriman is only vaguely recalled. Hannagan is all but forgotten. The next time you're on the gondola, looking down at one of the most beautiful and comfortable valleys in America, give them a little nod of appreciation.

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A CONVERSATION WITH

Peter Duchin

BY VAN GORDON SAUTER



“People say the resort has changed. Of course it has. Everything has changed. Sun Valley still is wonderful.”

The Duchin Room is an iconic element of the Sun Valley experience, a name inextricably linked to Sun Valley and its founding. Contrary to popular belief, however, it was not named for Eddy Duchin, premiere band leader of the 1930s and '40s. In fact, he never performed there. Instead, it was named for his wife, Marjorie.

Marjorie Oelrichs Duchin was the best friend of Marie Harriman, whose husband, Averell, founded Sun Valley Resort. Hired as Sun Valley Lodge's interior designer, Marjorie's intimate involvement in the birth of Averell's grand, destination ski resort prompted him to honor her with the eponymous room.

However, in 1937, mere months after the lodge opened, tragedy struck the Duchin family. Marjorie died five days after giving birth to their son, Peter. The Harrimans, godparents to the child, became his surrogate parents, and the subsequent relationship between Peter and the Harrimans was lasting and of great importance to all involved.

Peter, a successful musician in his own right, is one of very few people remaining with such close links to the Harrimans and Sun Valley's early days. He lived a remarkable life in the Harriman orbit, and now resides in New York and Connecticut. He still plays piano and leads his band at social occasions across the country. Gracious and unpretentious, he is a delightful raconteur and a superb fly-fisherman.

Peter, do you recall your first visit to Sun Valley?

Sure. I was about 4 or 5. I remember getting off the train and being picked up by a horse-drawn sleigh. With lots of blankets, fur blankets. It was warm and cozy and I guess I was a bit too young to find it sexy. The resort was then like an alpine village. And no matter where you looked you could not see a hedge fund manager.

Good memories of your times at Sun Valley?

I learned how to ski there. Went shooting and fishing with Joe Burgy (an early Sun Valley sports director) and Beartracks Taylor (an accomplished valley tracker). I now get out there to fish almost every year. I have a daughter living in Bozeman (Montana), so I drive over to visit friends. And Silver Creek has always been a great favorite.

At one point you actually worked in Sun Valley.

For two summers during high school I worked on the trail crew—told everyone I was in college. The place had 300 women employees and 200 male employees. How about those odds? In those days none of the big houses had been built. The whole place was very informal. No casual loafers or cocktail dresses.

Was Averell Harriman involved in the management of the resort?

Not much. It was there to benefit the railroad. He simply enjoyed being there and seeing people having a good time. And of course he was an accomplished skier.

Did you know Ernest Hemingway?

In my imagination he was almost as big as DiMaggio. He was a round, bearded man with a gruff manner. We fished and shot dove together with Burgy and Beartracks. He liked being with an awe-struck kid to whom he could tell stories about the Spanish Revolution and deep-sea fishing off Cuba.

Most people presume the Duchin Room is named after your father. But that's wrong?

Totally. My mother, Marjorie, was the best friend of Marie Harriman, Ave's wife, and a great friend of his, too. She was somewhat of a decorator. Ave asked them if they would like to come out and give some decorating suggestions. They of course thought the idea of being around all those young Austrian ski instructors was terrific. But it was my mother who came up with the idea of using molds to create cement logs for the lodge structure, rather than wooden logs. Cement doesn't rot. Averell liked the idea and was so appreciative he named the room after my mother. Of course, my father was furious. He thought it should be named after him. The resort was incredibly classy. It had all sorts of wonderful ingredients.

What do you think of Sun Valley today?

People say the resort has changed. Of course it has. Everything has changed. Sun Valley still is wonderful. The Holdings have done a superb job. I absolutely love being there. You can't be a stick-in-the-mud. Great people still go there.

Do you ever hear a song and suddenly think of Sun Valley?

Obviously, anything from *Sun Valley Serenade* does that. And around Christmas, if I'm playing a song of some kind that mentions winter, Sun Valley suddenly comes to my mind in a wonderful way.

You are still deeply involved with music, quite busy with your band.

Well, I've got to make a living. But my life is a lot more private now. And life is just different. I'm sitting in New York, and there is not one place here which plays live music you can dance to. Nightspots where you can have dinner and dance are gone. There's not much out there except the discotheques. When I was playing in the '60s at the Maisonette in the St. Regis, there were at least 20 other places where you could have dinner and dancing.

Born into a different time, Peter is clearly wistful for days gone by, as he notes in his strikingly frank and engaging memoir, *Ghost of a Chance*. One particularly choice morsel from the book has a charming connection to Sun Valley.

Peter recounts how he took off his junior year at Yale to study music in Paris, living on a barge on the Seine. He wanted to stay longer and resisted Averell's suggestions to return home, as expected, for his senior year in New Haven. Averell's resolution to the situation is a credit to their closeness and a testament to the Hariman get-it-done attitude that formed the foundation blocks of Sun Valley.



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Eddy, Peter and Eddy's new wife, Chiquita, vacationing in Sun Valley in 1948. Chiquita was Peter's governess.

"The end came one day in the first week of June, at about 11 in the morning," Peter writes. "I'd been up most of the night with a beautiful young woman who was now lying next to me. Both of us were naked and asleep when a rap on the hatch jolted me awake. I jumped out of bed and slid back the cover.

"The first thing I saw was a pair of black wing-tip shoes; the next thing, a pair of pin-striped, blue trouser legs. Finally, the face of Ave in his gray fedora, squinting down at me in my nakedness.

"How are you doing, Petey?" he asked. "Ave!" I said, grabbing a towel. "What are you doing here?"

"I'm here for some meetings. Thought I'd stop by to see when you're planning to go back to Yale."

"For a moment, I blinked. Then Ave reached into his pocket and said, 'I've got a prepaid plane ticket for you, right here.'" ❧

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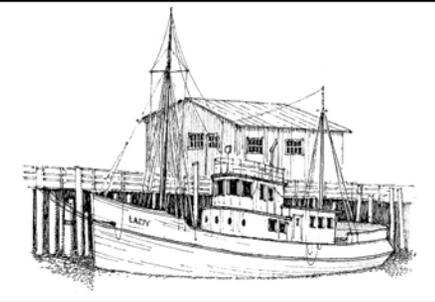
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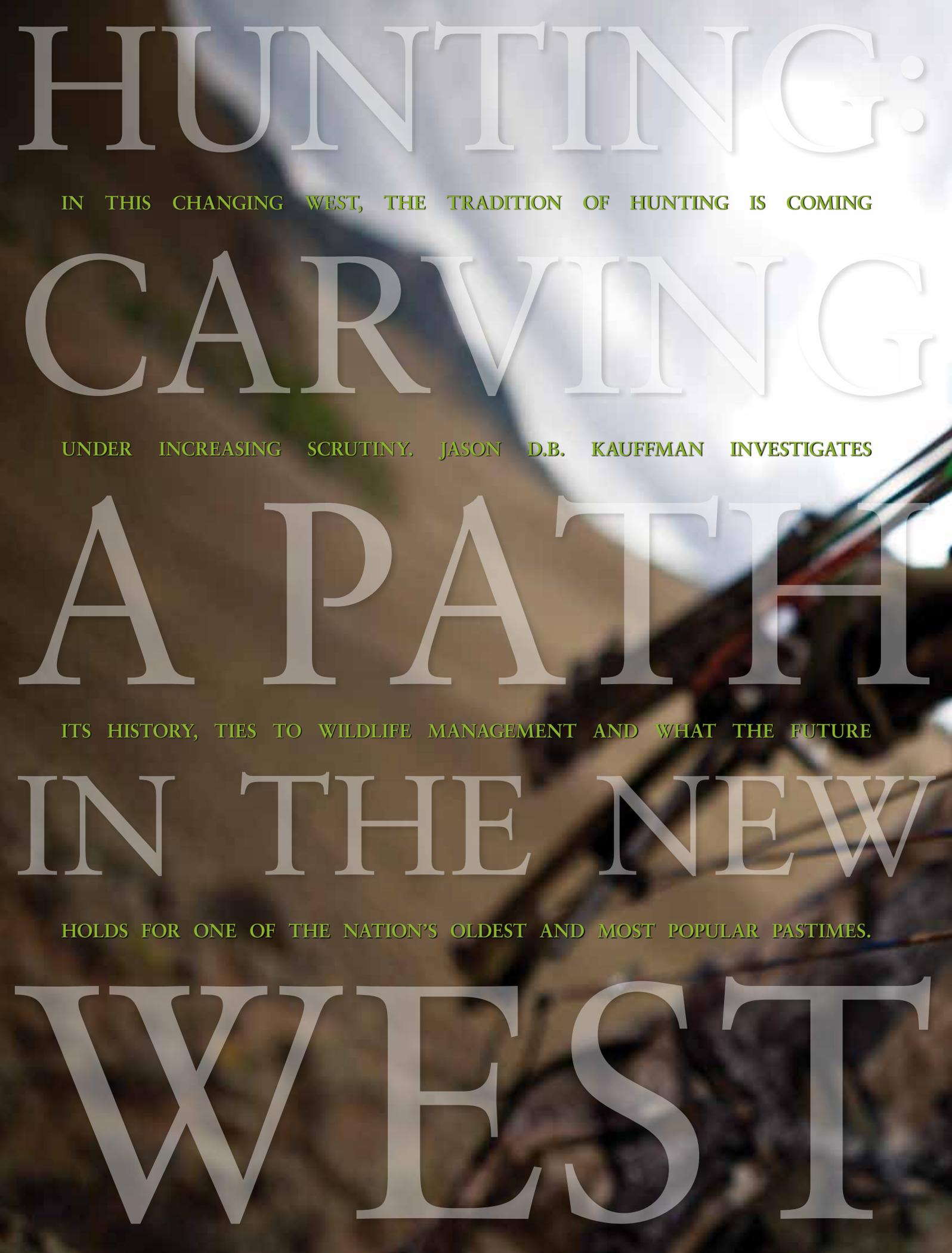

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PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH
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The unmistakable challenge rises clear from the depths of the steep-sided mountain valley. Somewhere below, in the heavily timbered draw ringed by overhanging cliffs, a large Rocky Mountain bull elk is sounding its bugle for all to hear.

It's a haunting melody generations of hunters search the hills and draws for. For those who tread in high places with rifle or bow in hand few sounds resonate as deeply as that spine-tingling autumn bugle.

On this particular late September day, as thin tendrils of misty, low-hanging rainclouds dance on the tips of densely packed Douglas fir that cling to the north faces of the narrow valley, a camouflage-clad bowhunter sits motionless, back against the rough-barked trunk of a solitary ridge-top tree.

Seconds after the old bull's bugle is plucked away by the steady breeze, the hunter raises an elk call to his mouth, inhales slightly and gently releases his breath through pursed lips. As a lungful of air passes over a reed hidden within the cylindrical call, another pitch-perfect bugle rises up.

For a moment, the counterfeit cry hangs heavily in the moist fall air, unanswered. But then, low and deep at first, a third bugle—more agitated than the first—rises up in answer. Soon, the still-invisible bull screams another challenge, this time closer to the waiting hunter. Senses heightened, the hunter notches an arrow and waits. Will the bull show itself near enough for a shot?

The hunter will soon find out.

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5 MOOSE**

BASED ON IDAHO FISH AND GAME TAGS SOLD IN 2009

Scenarios like this play out every fall in the mountains of Idaho. Today, more than 100,000 elk roam the state's backcountry, thanks in large part to modern big game management supported by the sale of hunting tags and licenses.

But changes are sweeping the West, brought about primarily by hundreds of thousands of new arrivals drawn by the landscape and its expansive amenities. Many of these modern-day homesteaders have no understanding of hunting's heritage and historical significance, and the question of whether this marriage of conservation and hunting deserves deeper scrutiny is being raised more frequently.

Blaine County is a microcosm of this conflicted modern West. In the southern half of the county, the hunting tradition still dominates. But in the more northern towns of Ketchum and Sun Valley, the percentage of people who still call themselves hunters is declining rapidly. Many celebrated figures in Sun Valley's early days—including Ernest Hemingway—were avid hunters. The same is not the case today.

Gone are the days when a hunter could roll into town with a dead buck strapped to the hood of a jeep or pickup truck without offending someone. Far worse for ethical hunters is the

poacher who knowingly breaks wildlife laws. Neither of these does anything positive for the image the nonhunting public has of hunters, said Chris Burget, a resident of the Big Lost River Valley northeast of Sun Valley. The enthusiastic hunting evangelist runs a website dedicated to fostering positive discussions about the ethics of the sport (www.bullsandbeavers.com).

All of this ultimately raises the question: What role will hunting play in the future of wildlife management decisions in the West?

THE FIGHT TO SAVE AMERICA'S WILDLIFE

The origins of the modern North American wildlife conservation model and its ties to hunting are rooted in a terrible personal tragedy borne by one of America's great leaders, Theodore Roosevelt.

On Valentine's Day, 1884, Roosevelt's wife, Alice Hathaway Lee Roosevelt, and his mother, Martha Bulloch Roosevelt, both died in the same Manhattan house within two hours of each other of different diseases. Deeply hurt by their deaths, Roosevelt journeyed west to Medora, North Dakota, to ranch.

For the next three years Roosevelt lived the life of a Westerner, which suited him well. An avid hunter, the future president of the United States embarked on hunting trips across the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming. There he took stock of the wholesale slaughter that unrestricted market hunters were inflicting on the nation's big game herds, which once seemed without end.

Returning East a few years later, Roosevelt helped found the Boone & Crockett Club. Named after famous frontiersmen Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett, the club would set out to stop and reverse the carnage. "What he saw was the waste of our natural resources. He saw the decimation of our wildlife through market hunting," said Tony Schoonen, chief of staff of today's Boone & Crockett Club.

The club's goal was a daring one for the time: convince a public brought up on the idea of inexhaustible resources that the nation was dangerously close to driving many of its wildlife species into extinction. The incredible declines of once-vast bison herds and the extinction of passenger pigeons in 1914—flocks of which once blackened the sky—helped its cause.

The first meeting of the Boone & Crockett Club was December 7, 1887. Among those gathered were Gifford Pinchot, a close friend of Roosevelt who would be named the first head of the U.S. Forest Service, and George Bird Grinnell, the well-known naturalist, writer and editor. "They were influential folks," said Schoonen. "Visionary people."

The club—to which Roosevelt gave his characteristic zeal—lobbied hard over the coming decades for the creation and enforcement of wildlife protection laws and the establishment of protected public lands.

In the late 1800s, Boone & Crockett helped convince Congress to expand and give greater protection to Yellowstone National Park. A few years later in 1900, Congress passed the Lacey Act, making it a federal offense to transport illegally killed wildlife across state borders. This effectively ended the era of market hunters.

Over the coming decades, more federal conservation laws were passed, including the 1937 Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act. Funded by taxes on the sale of sporting arms and ammunition, the act provides federal dollars to states for wildlife management and restoration.

During this time state wildlife agencies came into being. Among them, in 1899, was the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. By 1903, Idaho's first license fees were set (\$1 for resident males—women did not need a license at first—and nonresidents \$5). In 1938, voters approved a ballot initiative creating the mod-

ern Idaho Fish and Game Commission and establishing commission districts. The first infusion of Pittman-Robertson dollars to Idaho funded the trapping and transplanting of beaver. "In essence, the sportsmen taxed themselves to fund wildlife management," said Schoonen. "As a hunter you can point to the North American (wildlife conservation) model and say, 'I'm helping to fund that.'"

Millions of elk are believed to have roamed the North American continent prior to settlement. But by the late 19th century, those great herds were no more. According to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, elk numbers reached a low point around 1910, when an estimated 50,000 existed in all of North America. Similar trends were also seen among many other species of wild game.

Idaho's dwindling elk herds were augmented with transplants from herds in Yellowstone National Park in 1915. Similar Yellowstone transplants, with the elk transported by rail car, occurred throughout the



West. Efforts to transplant other species like bighorn sheep and mountain goats to their former ranges are still ongoing. Hunters have funded most of this work.

The model of having hunters fund the majority of states' wildlife conservation efforts still predominates among fish and game agencies, including here in Idaho. As in many other states, Idaho does not provide general fund tax dollars to Fish and Game, though some would like the funding model to be revised to give nonhunters a greater say in state wildlife management.

Ralph Maughan, a Pocatello conservationist who retired from teaching political science at Idaho State University in 2007, thinks state wildlife agencies concentrate their efforts too strongly on the popular game species like elk and deer at the expense of other nongame species. Formerly a hunter himself, Maughan said that it is in large

part because fish and game agencies are still mostly funded through hunting license and tag fees.

Though the Idaho Department of Fish and Game does receive a small amount of funding from fees generated by the state's wildlife license plates for vehicles, Maughan would like to see other ways of generating funding for wildlife management apart from game license and tag fees, particularly for the management of nongame species.

DOES HUNTING EQUAL CONSERVATION?

It's debatable whether Roosevelt would recognize the West if he were alive today. Where only sporadic ranching, mining and timber towns existed within horizon-to-horizon views, now millions of people coexist. But thanks to the foresight of Roosevelt and others, large stretches of the West are owned by the public and managed by federal agencies like the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service.

On these lands, one of the greatest conservation successes of all time has played out in the century since their preservation. In Idaho alone, there are now an estimated 103,000 elk, 300,000 mule deer and 200,000 whitetail deer. They're joined by 15,000 moose, 11,500 pronghorn antelope and 2,900 bighorn sheep.

Hunter success rates also illustrate this comeback. In 2009, Idaho hunters killed 42,189 deer and 15,813 elk statewide. Though those figures are lower than the early- to mid-1990s, when the state's elk population levels reached their modern peak, it's still higher than just about every year from the mid-1980s back.

Few would disagree that modern big game management in North America has been a resounding success. Roosevelt would be proud. Unregulated market hunting is now seen only in history books, not on the high plains or in the forests. Healthy herds of elk, deer and other wild ungulates populate just about every square mile of habitat available to them. "We have more elk than we've ever seen in some of these areas," said Chris Burget, a bowhunter. "Because of game management."

Of course, for many years, game management typically meant managing certain wildlife species for the ultimate benefit of hunters, a counterintuitive idea to those not brought up in a culture that valued hunting. It's only in recent decades that governments have focused their attention on conserving all wildlife, especially after the passage of the federal Endangered Species Act in 1973.



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UPDATED: Check back often for updates on this site and tracking project.

News: This website is dedicated to providing information regarding the replacement project for the Sun Valley and surrounding region.

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The sites included on the map below are currently under consideration for a replacement project.

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back to top



In a remarkable shift away from widespread anti-predator policies of the past, black bears and cougars roam the West's open spaces, managed by fish and game agencies just like other big game species. Only the gray wolf remains temporarily outside of state control, and that's largely due to ongoing controversies over how and at what levels they should be managed.

In some states, especially in the East, wildlife conservation has been so successful that big game managers are faced with having to cull populations of species like whitetail deer that have exceeded the carrying capacity of the land. In Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, officials are struggling to cope with abundant elk herds and their decimation of aspen stands. State wildlife managers point to examples like these to argue that hunting remains a valuable tool in the new West.

But is hunting really necessary for managing wildlife? Or put another way, do you have to kill wildlife to preserve wildlife? In some cases the answer is yes, Maughan says. "I think it's important to have (hunting) around at some level," he said. "The natural world has been modified so much."

But what about people who have never hunted and can't imagine ever doing so? Ketchum wildlife artist Lori McNee is one such person. When she moved to Idaho some 25 years ago, she was startled to learn just how ingrained hunting was in the local culture.

McNee isn't opposed to hunting, she points out. What she believes is that hunters need to come to their activity with a reverence for the animal they intend to kill. Her love for wildlife is evident in her intricate oil paintings and illustrations for organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and the Wolf Education Research Center (www.lorimcnee.com). Like Maughan, she believes the habitat pressures brought on by humans require carefully controlled management. "I understand there's a place in this world for hunting," she said.

Do the same core values that guided Roosevelt the hunter and politician in the early 20th century still matter today? Are Idaho hunters and their brethren aware of the conservation legacy they've inherited from their forefathers? Avid elk and deer hunter Jim Unsworth, deputy director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, thinks so. He argues that hunters are conservationists first. It was their dollars that helped jumpstart the remarkable turnaround of wild game herds, both through the funding of salaries of wildlife conservation professionals and the preservation of state wildlife management areas (200,000 acres at last count), among other things.

And, at a time when more people are

considering where their food comes from, there's no more local or healthy source of food than wild game, Unsworth points out. A deer sustained on the bounty of Mother Nature puts a whole new spin on the term organic. "It's an amazing thing to gather your own food, prepare it with your own hands and then see it become a nutritious meal for your family," he said.

It's probably worth thinking back to the ethical hunting code originally developed by the Boone & Crockett Club: the fair-chase ethic. Hunting was defined as "the ethical, sportsmanlike and lawful pursuit and taking of any free-ranging wild, native North American big game animal in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper advantage over such animals." It was this code that Roosevelt and others believed would separate modern hunters from market hunters of the past.

No type of big game hunter demonstrates this fair chase ethic better than today's traditional bowhunters. Armed with nothing more than a recurve or longbow and arrows they may have carved and fletched themselves, they attempt to stalk within as few as 10 meters of alert elk and deer. Bowhunting is an implicit rejection of the new technologies that enable hunters to take longer and longer shots, said Jeff Fealko, president of Idaho Traditional Bowhunters, an organization of about 400 members. But the bowhunter is still dwarfed by his rifle-toting comrade. In 2009, Idaho rifle hunters bought 118,251 deer tags, bowhunters just 15,207.

Though success is obviously harder to come by as a bowhunter, relying on traditional methods gives Fealko a greater connection to the natural world. "It's more fun to see how close I can get to an animal," he said. "I'm in the field and enjoying nature longer."

The origins of the North American wildlife conservation model began with the public trust doctrine, a principle of English heritage that holds that certain resources should be preserved for public use, and that governments are required to maintain them for the public's "reasonable use." Wildlife is among these resources. Roosevelt and others didn't want to see the country's wildlife controlled by the elite.

Idaho's healthy populations of ungulates and the opportunities regular Idahoans have to connect with them—whether as a hunter or just simple observer—indicates they succeeded. Next spring, the state's elk herds will shake off the cold of winter and begin foraging on the lush green growth of the warm season. Over the summer, the next generation of newborn elk calves will benefit from preserved public lands, which hunters helped create.

Next fall, the stirring bugles of bull elk will once again ring out in the mountains. ❧

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T H E W I N T E R W I N D S

by Greg Moore
photos by Adam Majors

snowkiting **SOARS** on the camas prairie

Until recently, few people would have believed the Camas Prairie, 50 miles southwest of the Wood River Valley, would become a national sports mecca. The pastures and barley fields, the tumbleweeds and the quiet farming town of Fairfield, population 417, seem a world away from the sports buzz of Sun Valley. Pickup trucks down on the prairie carry hay bales, not skis or bikes.

And yet, word has spread: Camas Prairie is one of the top sites in the United States for the emerging sport of snowkiting.

What's snowkiting? It's kiteboarding on snow instead of water. The snowkiter, on a pair of skis or a snowboard, wears a harness attached to a small paraglider-type kite. The kite catches the wind and pulls the skier or boarder across the snow and, if the rider wants, into the air.

Sun Valley native Andrew Monty Goldman first saw snowkiting while engaged in big-mountain free-skiing competitions in Europe and was hooked immediately. The 30-year-old Boise resident now runs a snowkiting school, Snowkite Soldier, on the Camas Prairie, where he says he's reached speeds of about 60 mph and been lifted up to about 300 feet off the snow, staying aloft for a minute or two. "I like the speed. I like the adventure. I like the air—that's a huge part. I like the sport because it's new—people are out there every day doing things no one has done before."

The Camas Prairie is a draw to snowkiters because the altitude preserves the snowpack throughout the winter over huge, almost treeless expanses with reliable wind and a highway parallel to the prevailing wind. Snowkiters cruise across a mix of public and private land. Goldman says suitable conditions there average about five days a week in the winter.

Local snowkiters, which currently number about 100, had the prairie to themselves for years, but now the word is out. Snowkiters flock to the area from far-flung locales, in particular from places popular for kiteboarding in the summer such as Hood River, Oregon, and the Hawaiian island of Maui. Goldman estimates a thousand or so annual visitors.

Camas Prairie is flanked by hills stretching north into the Soldier Mountains. It's a place where beginners can learn on the flats, then venture into more challenging terrain as they acquire more skills. Ryan Waite, a 31-year-old Boise resident and owner of Idaho Kitesports, teaches kiteboarding in the summer and snowkiting in the winter. He says that when winds are optimum on the prairie, he covers between 50 and 80 miles in a day. "Your kite will take you wherever you want to go," he says. "You have an amazing amount of control. You can always tack into the wind."

Goldman calls his kite a free lift ticket to the hilltops. If a hill's high enough—his minimum for efficiency is about 1,000 vertical feet—he stuffs his kite into a pack when he reaches the top and lets gravity take over as he skis the powder. "You're up there really, really fast, at least as fast as a high-speed quad," he says. "The difference is you're not fighting for tracks. There's first tracks all day."



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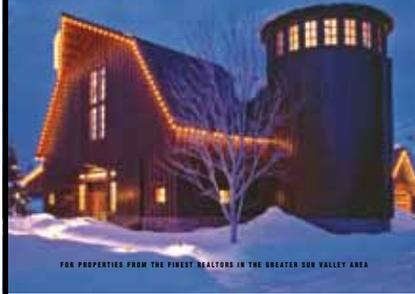
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The most popular launching site is at the western end of the prairie, from the Malcomson snowpark, 21 miles west of Fairfield.

There are also some suitable sites within the Wood River Valley. “Phantom Hill is the hot spot,” says local snowkiter Chris Campbell. “The sport has definitely taken off around the valley.” The Phantom Hill area, about 11 miles north of Ketchum, has open, rolling terrain suitable for beginners, bigger hills along the foot of the Boulder Mountains and some halfpipe-style features. It’s best in the spring when the area often gets winds from the south.

Waite and Goldman say people who are already accomplished skiers or boarders can pick up snowkiting with just a half day of instruction. Goldman says an increasing number of the sport’s participants are women. “A huge misconception about kiting is that it’s an upper-body sport. But you’re hooked into a harness—it’s very comfortable.”

Another concern of those unfamiliar with the sport is that they might lose control and get dragged forever across the snow by the kite. However, every kite-and-harness system has a release device that also collapses the kite. “You can stop the ride whenever you want to,” says Goldman. Waite acknowledges that eight or 10 years ago, he would have called the sport extreme, but with advances in equipment, it’s become considerably safer. A beginner snowkiter can get set up with a new kite and harness for between \$1,000 and \$2,000. And, as everyone knows, the wind blows free.

Skis and snowboards work well for snowkiting, though Goldman says boards are better for doing aerial tricks and may have the edge in riding through powder on the flats. “You can make these huge turns into pockets of deep snow,” says Goldman. Use whichever you’re familiar with, he advises.

Though snowkiting’s a great way to explore new terrain quickly, one rule of the sport is “Don’t ride any farther than you’re willing to walk back.” Even experts use alpine touring bindings or a split board in case something goes wrong and they have to hoof it.

Snowkiting works well in hilly terrain, but the sport’s aficionados say that so far, using a kite to climb serious mountains and ski down them is not very practical, especially in areas with rocks and trees. However, Goldman says, it’s not something that can be ruled out. “Who knows?” he asks. “It just takes someone to figure it out.”





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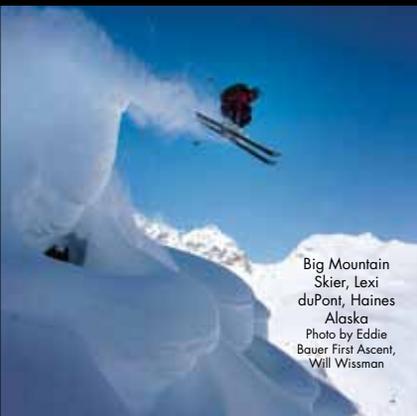
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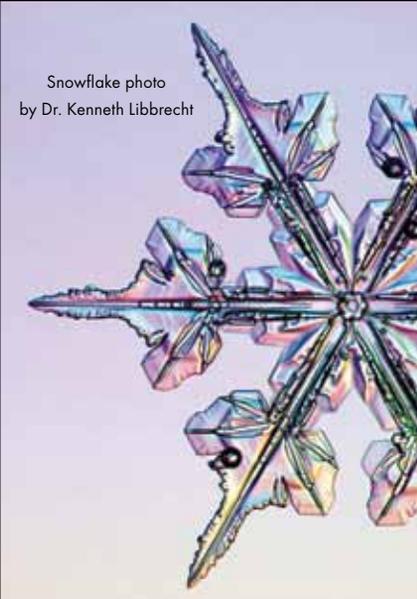
Big Mountain Skier, Lexi duPont, Haines Alaska
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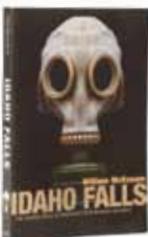


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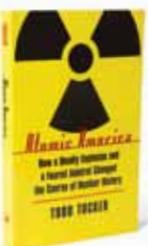
the idaho BOOKSHELF

Van Gordon Sauter unearths a handful of new (and old) gems to fill the shelves of any Idaho enthusiast.



Idaho Falls: The Untold Story of America's First Nuclear Accident

By William McKeown, Ecw Press, 2003



Atomic America: How a Deadly Explosion and a Feared Admiral Changed the Course of Nuclear History

By Todd Tucker, Free Press, 2009

January 3, 1961, was a beastly cold night in the Idaho desert at the National Reactor Testing Station, a military research facility not far from Idaho Falls and only a few hours drive from Ketchum. It was a time when the nation saw nuclear power as a critical component of our defense against the Soviet Empire and a domestic source of power for illuminating cities and fueling industrial and scientific growth.

On that night communication ceased with the three low level servicemen manning the experimental stationary low power plant No. 1. Firefighters who went to a perfunctory check encountered the only fatal nuclear reactor accident in U.S. history. A meltdown and steam explosion had occurred when a critical control rod was removed incorrectly. The firefighters encountered a horrific scene and a stunningly high radioactive isotope contamination. The three servicemen were dead, so corrupted by the event they were buried in lead coffins in cement graves.

It took more than 40 years to get the access, and to ask the right questions, about how this event occurred. Faulty planning and gross mismanagement of the facility are most likely factors, perhaps inept selection of employees or amateurish training. For years attention has focused on the three men. Was the rod removal a suicidal act? Or a homicidal act? Twisted relationships and stunning degeneracy boiled beneath the surface of the presumed rectitude of Idaho Falls. Exactly what happened in that control room will never be known, but Admiral Hyman Rickover, with great skill and

commitment, succeeded in getting the American nuclear program back on track, a virtuoso performance of science and politics.

The NRTS accident foreshadowed Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, and it should not be a forgotten event. McKeown, a journalist, does a better job here of telling a great yarn. Tucker, trained as a naval nuclear engineer, focuses on the technology and the politics surrounding the event. Neither book is a great read. But both reveal a dramatic, long-submerged event and make it come alive.

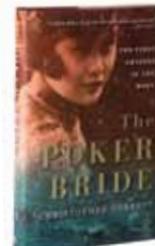


Then Came the Evening

By Brian Hart, Bloomsbury USA, 2009

This is a first novel by a highly gifted author (a native of McCall) with significant potential. What contemporary author addresses material like this? The only answer is Cormac McCarthy. This family drama (and this family would drive anyone into a cave deep in the Sawtooths) is engaging and dramatic, and not for the faint of heart.

Set in Idaho, this novel proves rewarding for anyone who admires quality fiction but is not unnerved by tough content. The narrative is unrelenting and the characters precisely defined. Stay alert to Brian Hart. He could go the distance.



The Poker Bride: The First Chinese in the Wild West

By Christopher Corbett, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2010

Try to find a credible trace of the Chinese population that lived in the Wood River Valley and the other Western mining communities during the days of gold and silver. Most likely you will only find newspaper clippings—many reflecting the virulent anti "Celestial" bias that spread cruelty and chaos in the mining communities, not to mention the seedy legislatures that passed odious exclusionary laws.

Here and there you may find graves—empty graves, the bodies long since repatriated by benevolent societies that sent agents (known as bone collectors) to locate remains for shipment back for burial in China. The

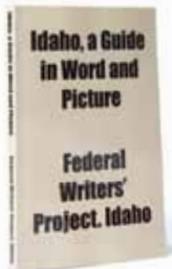
movement of those bodies was known as “the caravan of the dead.”

It is thus a joy to find a contemporary book that profiles this remarkable Chinese population and celebrates Idaho's most memorable native of China, Polly Bemis, the poker bride. As an attractive young girl in China she was sold by her destitute parents into sexual slavery in America. She was singled out for shipment in 1872 to a Chinese man in northern Idaho. She became his concubine, but he soon lost her in a poker game to a feckless gambler and idler from Connecticut, Charlie Bemis.

When Bemis was shot in a gambling dispute, Polly nursed him to recovery. Polly and Charlie eventually did something remarkable, and dangerous, in its time: they married. The two moved to an isolated little farm on the Salmon River, a day's horseback ride out of Warren. It was one of the most inaccessible places in America.

Charlie died in 1922. Polly lived there until 1933, when she became ill and two prospectors brought her down to Grangeville. She died there at the age of 81. Her body was not returned to China, but to the ranch, where she wanted to be buried within earshot of the roar of the River of No Return.

This is not just a biography of Polly Bemis. It is a grand story of the Chinese in the West. Some of the characters bring tears to your eyes. Their courage and resilience is staggering. If you care about Idaho and the American West, get this book. It is informative, entertaining and deeply touching. Corbett, a journalism professor in Maryland, has given us a great gift.



Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture
By Vardis Fisher, Native American Books Distributor, 1937

During the depression the federal government commissioned some threadbare writers on the economic abyss to write guides to the

states. The first completed was a guide to Idaho written by Vardis Fisher, who then, and even now, years after his death in 1968, is *the* preeminent Idaho author.

Reading the basic book now, nearly 75 years after its publication, is like sauntering through an elaborate Hollywood backlot, featuring villages and landscapes radiant with an unspoiled simplicity and relative isolation. Subsequent editions are altered and/or expanded, but even they sustain the essence of an Idaho partly vanished, but still accessible if you hit the backroads.

Original copies are pricey (nearly \$600 for first editions in good condition) but subsequent editions can be found for around \$10. This is a delightful gift for anyone who relishes books and celebrates Idaho.

Fisher, incidentally, is best known for his book *Mountain Men*, adapted by Sydney Pollock for his Robert Redford film, *Jeremiah Johnson*. He also wrote a highly controversial book on Brigham Young and the Mormons, *Church of God*. Fisher, himself the son of a Mormon bishop, was an aggressive atheist, living near Hagerman on the Malad River. He was not a great American writer, but he was certainly *our* writer. 

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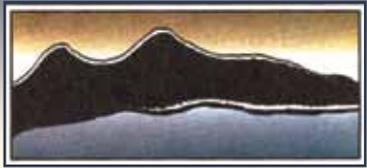
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Ketchum Tree Lighting and Caroling Party, Dec. 1. Ketchum Town Square, 5:30 p.m. Santa arrives at 6 p.m. Details: 725.2105

Barkin' Basement's Bow Wow Bazaar, Dec. 3-4. Hailey. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Details: 788.3854

Festival of Trees, Dec. 1, 3 & 4. Wednesday, A Christmas Shopping Affair 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Friday, Fashion Show & Luncheon, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, gala event 6-9 p.m. Senior Connection, Hailey. Details: 788.3468

Papoose Club 20th annual Holiday Bazaar, Dec. 4, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Dec. 5, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Hemingway Elementary, Ketchum.

Santa Paws, Dec. 4-5. Pet pictures with Santa Claus, for the Animal Shelter. Dirty Beagle, Hailey. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Details: 788.6755

Cosmic: Artists Consider Astronomy, Nov. 12-Jan. 7, Sun Valley Center for the Arts exhibition, The Center, Ketchum. Many events, lectures and activities (including a Family Day, Dec. 4, The Center, Hailey. 3-5 p.m.). Details: 726.9491 or sunvalleycenter.org

Caritas Chorale Sing-along, Dec. 4. St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Sun Valley. 6:30 p.m.

Page to Stage, Dec. 5. St. Thomas Playhouse production. St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Sun Valley. Details: 726.5349

The Nutcracker, Dec. 10, 7 p.m., Dec. 11, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Dec. 12, 3 p.m., Sun Valley Ballet's annual production, nexStage Theatre, Ketchum. Details: 726.9876

Sharon Isbin on guitar, Dec. 11. Part of the Sun Valley Artist Series, Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 8 p.m. Details: 725.5807

Galena Lodge Winterstart Race, Dec. 12. Galena Lodge, Hwy 75, 24 miles north of Ketchum. 11 a.m. Details: 726.3497

50 Classic Ski Descents of North America by Chris Davenport, Dec. 16. Film screening, Sun Valley Opera House. 6 p.m., Book signing, Whiskey Jacques', Ketchum. 8:30 p.m. \$10.

75th Sun Valley Resort Winter Season Celebration, Dec. 17 - March 15. See Sun Valley Essentials, page 40.

A Christmas Carol: The Musical, Dec. 17-24. nexStage Theatre, Ketchum. Details: 726.9124

Sun Valley Resort Tree Lighting Ceremony, Dec. 18. Sun Valley Carolers and Santa Claus. 5 p.m. Details: 622.2135

Christmas Concert, Dec. 19. Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church, Sun Valley. Details: 720.0458

Sun Valley Hallelujah Chorus, Dec. 20-21. nexStage Theatre, Ketchum. Details: 928.7676

Dara Torres presents Gold Medal Fitness, Dec. 21. Book signing, Zenergy at Thunder Spring, Ketchum. 5-7 p.m. Free. Details: 725.0595

Sun Valley Resort Nastar Races, Dec. 21. Sun Valley. Details: 622.6356

Mike Murphy at the Boiler Room, Dec. 22. Comedian, Sun Valley. Details: 622.2135

Christmas Eve in Sun Valley, Dec. 24. See Sun Valley Essentials, page 40.

Christmas Classic Ski Race, Dec. 27. Nordic ski racing 10, 5 and 3k. Lake Creek. 11 a.m. Contact: 726.3899

Company B Winter, Dec. 27-31. Performing arts day camp for ages 5-13. St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Sun Valley. Details: 726.5349

Bill Summers' Antique Show, Dec. 28-30. nexStage Theatre, Ketchum.

Sun Valley Resort New Year's Eve Party, Dec. 31. Live music by Freddie Pink Band, Sun Valley Inn. 9 p.m. - 1 a.m. Details: 622.2135

JANUARY

Prairie Creek Snow Maker Classic, Jan. 8. 15, 7.5, 5 and 3k xcountrly ski race, Prairie Creek. 11 a.m. Details: 726.3497

Susan Spelius Dunning on piano, Jan. 8. Sun Valley Artist Series, Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 8 p.m. Details: 725.5807

Galena Lodge Free Learn to Ski Clinic, Jan. 9. Skate and classic, Hwy. 75, 24 miles north of Ketchum. 1 p.m. Details: 726.4010

BCRD Ski Free Day, Jan. 9. All Blaine County Rec. District Nordic trails. Details: 578.2273

The Second City, Jan. 13-14. Company of Fools hosts the famed comedy troop, Liberty Theatre, Hailey. 7 p.m. Details: 578.9122

Sun Valley Ski Club Skoch Cup, Jan. 14-16. Bald Mountain. Details: 622.3003

BCRD Learn to Ski clinic, Jan. 16. Quigley Nordic. All Day. Details: 578.2273

BCRD Ski Free Day, Jan. 16. All BCRD Nordic trails. All Day. Details: 578.2273

Footlight Blaine County School Dance Outreach Tour, Jan. 21-Feb. 4. Presenting *Creatures-Myths & Cryptids*. Details: 578.5462

On Ensemble in concert, Jan. 21. Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 6:30 p.m. Details: 726.9491

Galena Lodge Ski The Boulder Clinic, Jan. 22. Hwy. 75, 24 miles north of Ketchum. 9 a.m. \$30. Details: 726.4010

Company of Fools Casino Royale benefit, Jan. 28. Details: 578.9122

Sun Valley Nordic Festival, Jan. 29-Feb. 6. Activities, races, clinics and other events. Details: SVNordicFestival.com

BCRD Ski the Rails, Jan. 29. Nordic ski tour on the Wood River Trail. Start Serenade Lane, Ketchum. 10 a.m. Details: 578.2273

15th annual Galena and Trails Winter Benefit, Jan. 29. Sun Valley Limelight Room. 5:30-10 p.m. Details: 578.2273

Galena Lodge Loppet, Jan. 30. Galena Lodge, 10 a.m. Details: 726.4010

FEBRUARY

Sun Valley Ski Club Reunion Week, Jan. 30-Feb. 4. Sun Valley. Details: 622.3003

Backcountry Film Festival, Feb. 1. Liberty Theatre, Hailey. 6:30 p.m. Details: 726.7485

Best of Banff Film Festival, Feb. 4-5. nexStage Theatre, Ketchum. 6 p.m. Details: 622.0095

35th annual Wells Fargo Boulder Mountain Tour, Feb. 5. Galena Lodge. All Day. Details: www.BoulderMountainTour.com

Sun Valley Resort Luna Eclipse Rail Jam, Feb. 5, 19 & March 19. Dollar Mountain, Sun Valley. Details: 622.2135

Ben Hong & Peter Henderson in concert, Feb. 12. Cello and piano presented by the Sun Valley Artist Series, Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 8 p.m. Details: 725.5807

Family of Women Film Festival, Feb. 18-20. nexStage Theatre, Ketchum. Details: 622.1554

Marley in the Mountains, Feb. 19. Reggae concert. Ketchum. Details: MarleyintheMountains.com

Share Your Heart Ball, Feb. 26. Benefit for Camp Rainbow Gold, Sun Valley Inn. Details: 208.422.0842

Snow Box Derby, Feb. 27. Rotarun Ski Area, Hailey. Details: 578.2273

MARCH / APRIL

Sweet Plantain in concert, March 4. Sun Valley Opera House. 6:30 p.m. Details: 726.9491

Wood River Arts Alliance Children's Festival, March 5. Community Campus, Hailey.

U.S. Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Nationals, March 5-13. Sun Valley Resort.

Ari Fleischer, March 10. Lecture at Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 6:30 p.m. \$25-\$35. Details: 726.9491

Alfie Boe in concert, March 10. Sun Valley Inn. Details: 622.2135

Boulder Mountain Classic Tour, March 12. Along Harriman Trail. Details: 726.3497

De Temps Antan in concert, March 13. Sun Valley Opera House. 6:30 p.m. Details: 726.9491

Papoose Club Quigley Nordic Cup, March 19. Quigley Nordic, Hailey. Details: 788.1785

Italian Saxophone Quartet, March 25. Presbyterian Church of the Big Wood, Ketchum. 8 p.m. Details: 725.5807

ISHA & U.S. Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame Skiing Celebration & Induction Ceremony, March 28-April 3. Sun Valley Resort. Week of reunions, skiing and a film festival culminating in the induction ceremony on April 2, Sun Valley Inn, 6 p.m. Details: 622.2135

Galena Lodge Closing Day, April 3. Ride, Stride & Glide race, Hwy. 75, 24 miles north of Ketchum. Details: 726.4010

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SUN VALLEY ESSENTIALS

75th Sun Valley Resort Winter Season Celebrations: Season Opens, Nov. 25. Dollar Mountain Terrain Park Rail Jam exhibition, Dec. 17. Silver & Gold Ice Show, Dec. 21. Featuring Olympic medalists Evan Lysacek, Sasha Cohen, Brian Boitano, and more. Torchlight parade on Dollar with fireworks follows. Sun Valley. 6 p.m. Details: 622.2135

Christmas at Sun Valley Resort: Start the festivities with a Christmas Concert (Dec. 23, Sun Valley Opera House, 7:30 p.m.). Christmas Eve carolers at 5:30 p.m., followed by *The Nutcracker On Ice*, a world-class skating show at 5:45 p.m. The finale is a torchlight parade down the mountain, fireworks and a visit from Santa. Details: 622.2135

Galena Lodge Dinners: Winter dinners, Dec. 24-27, Dec. 29-31 & Feb. 12. Full Moon dinners, Dec. 19-21, Jan. 19-21, Feb. 17-19 & March 18-20. Wine dinner, Jan. 15 (transportation available). Valentine's dinner, Feb. 14. Galena Lodge, Hwy 75, 24 miles north of Ketchum, 6:30 p.m. Details: 726.4010

ART: Sun Valley Gallery Association Gallery Walks, Nov. 26, Dec. 29, Feb. 11 & March 4. Walk-about town, peruse art, drink wine and meet artists. Ketchum. 5-8 p.m.

THEATER: Company of Fools presents *Moonlight and Magnolias*, Dec. 14-31. *Snowflake*, Jan. 21-23. *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, Feb. 16-March 5. Liberty Theatre, Hailey. \$28 (\$20 seniors, \$10 students). Details: 578.9122

OPERA: The Met Live in HD series, Live transmissions from the Metropolitan Opera. Dec. 11, Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Feb. 26, March 19 & April 9. At Big Wood 4 Cinema, Hailey. 11 a.m. \$22 adults, \$15 18 and under. Details: www.sunvalleyopera.com

SUN VALLEY ADVENTURES CLASSIC OFF-BALDY WINTER ACTIVITIES

NORDIC & SNOWSHOEING: The Wood River Trail offers free Nordic skiing from Ketchum to Bellevue. The North Valley Trails, Galena Lodge, Quigley Nordic and Quigley Winter Park all offer trails for a fee (details: 578.2273). Free Snowshoe Walks are offered Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout the winter, at Galena Lodge at 11 a.m. (details: 726.4010). The Sun Valley Nordic & Snowshoe Center offers 42 kilometers of Nordic trails starting at the Sun Valley Club, Sun Valley Resort (details: 622.2135).

TUBING & SKATING: The snow tubing park at Dollar Mountain is located by the Half-Dollar lift. Indoor and outdoor ice skating is available at Sun Valley Lodge, along with rentals and lessons. Free ice skating can be found at Atkinson Park in Ketchum and Hailey Ice at Roberta McKercher Park.

GONDOLA: Non-skiers can enjoy The Roundhouse for breakfast and lunch throughout the winter via the gondola from River Run Lodge.

gear up [winter wares]

By Greg Moore



Avalanche beacons

Digital technology keeps making beacons better. The Ortovox S1 identifies multiple burials showing the position of each victim relative to the searcher. The Mammut Pulse Barryvox also identifies if victims are still alive by picking up their heartbeats.

\$525 Ortovox S1, \$450 Mammut, Backwoods Mountain Sports, Elephant's Perch, Lost River Sports



Rottefella New Telemark Norm:

New Telemark Norm, or NTN, is a binding-boot combination that gives tele skiers a more stable platform, as well as a boot without the traditional telemark "duckbill" toe that's easier to boot-climb in.

The Rottefella binding grips the entire front half of the boot, not just the toe, and has a heel platform that can be lifted for climbing. It combines with Scarpa or Garmont boots that are also compatible with Dynafit alpine touring bindings. "You can carve much better with this system," says Peter Heekin at Lost River Sports.

\$400 Rottefella NTN binding, \$699 Scarpa TX Pro boot, Backwoods Mountain Sports, The Elephant's Perch, Lost River Sports



Black Diamond Avalung

Intended to give backcountry users a fighting chance if they're buried in a slide, the avalung helps victims suck fresh air out of the snow, preventing a suffocating ice mask from forming over their faces as they exhale. The avalung combines a tube to breathe into with exhaust valves at the bottom of an attached backpack.

\$179 - \$279, Backwoods Mountain Sports, The Elephant's Perch, Lost River Sports

Klymit Kinetic Vest

Ogden, Utah-based company Klymit introduces a line of vests that use argon gas for insulation. Lighter than down-filled clothing, trimmer and with adjustable warmth, the vests add insulation by inflating to about half an inch thick using a small gas canister. When deflated, the vest packs to almost nothing.

\$200 and up, PK's Ski & Sports

Rocker technology: skis & snowboards

A revolution in ski and board design second only to the introduction of shaped skis? That's how shop managers describe rocker technology. The concept gives a ski or a board a bit of reverse camber, the amount and position depending on its intended use. "When it first appeared, it was just considered for powder and crud," says Sturtevant's owner Rob Santa. "Now it's gone mainstream." New powder skis have considerable upward bend to help them float in deep snow. But even many all-mountain skis now have a bit of "early rise" in the tips. Even on groomed snow, rocker helps novice and intermediate skiers initiate turns. Learning on the new skis, says Bill Fundy at Pete Lane's, "is going to be like turning on a light in a dark room." New snowboards have a range of profiles from traditional camber—still optimum for carving fast turns on the groomed—to Burton's Flying V, which incorporates double camber underfoot with rocker at the ends. Totally reverse camber is great for playful riding, but can be unstable at speed.

Many models available at all local ski and board shops

Bauer Vapor X:40 hockey skates

Years ago, skate manufacturers adapted ski boot technology to provide stiffness and a better fit. Skaters can now take advantage of the same moldable-shell technology that skiers enjoy. "They go in the oven just like we're doing with boots," says Jim Santa at Sturtevant's.

\$369, Sturtevant's



ABS avalanche airbag

An inflatable bag designed to float the wearer in an avalanche, the German-made ABS inflates within three seconds with the pull of a handle attached to a gas canister. According to the Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research, of 223 people wearing airbags and caught in slides, all but three survived.

\$700, The Elephant's Perch, Backwoods Mountain Sports





Yellow Brick Road Grand Opening, September
Kim Garvin, Sarah Hedrick, Fern Bernbaum & Dena Madden.



Dog Days of Summer Fundraiser, July
Pat Billhardt & Helcia Graff



Danny Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament, August
Don & Kathryn Felder



Sun Valley Ice Show, July
Johnny Weir & Ashley Clark



Advocates Gala Auction, June
Peggy Goldwyn, Marshall Peterson, Jeanne Meyer & Richard Carr



Allen & Company, July
Mark Zuckerberg



Sun Valley Wellness Festival, May
Jamie Lee Curtis and Anita McCann



Sun Valley Old-Timers Reunion, August
Nelson Bennett & Mary Jane Conger



Cowboy Ball, July
Leva Parker, John Blackburn, Mike Jessen & Mary Dean Jessen



Advocates Gala Auction, June
Rebekah & Larry Helzel



Sun Valley Ice Show, August
Evan Lysacek



Hailey Springfest, May
Amy Rivkin, Cristalle Tormey & Danielle Anspach.



Sun Valley Center Summer Concerts, August
Steve Martin



Crisis Hotline Fundraiser, June
Svea Grover, Janet Barton & Kristin Bevers

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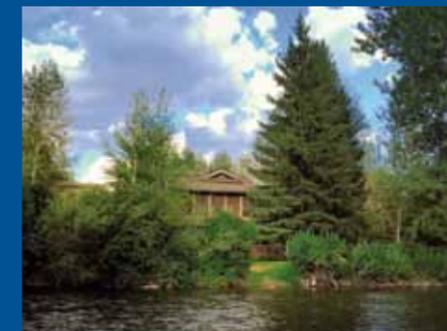
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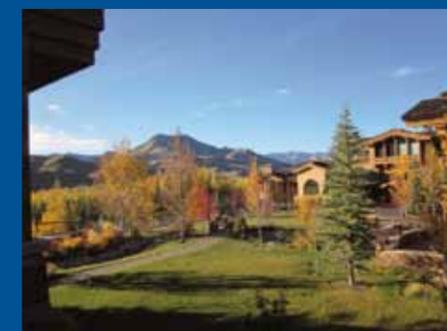
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