

INSIDE *Singletree*

JULY 2018

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SINGLETREE



The PROVENCHER Family

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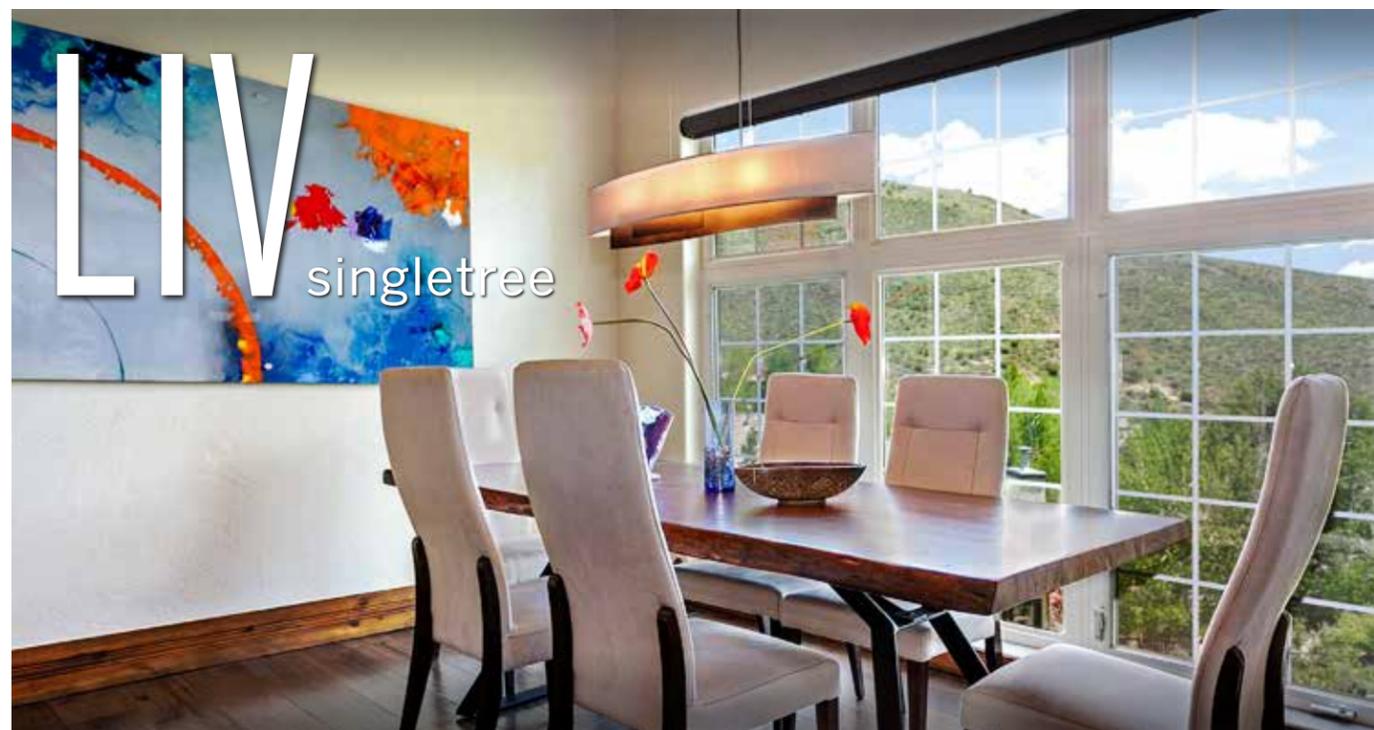
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|--------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Active | 1121 Berry Creek Rd #D1 (CD) | \$695,000 | N/A | N/A | \$400.81 | N/A | 3 | 2 (2 0 0) | 1,734 | No |
| Active | 160 Hackamore Rd #A (DU) | \$735,000 | N/A | N/A | \$333.79 | N/A | 3 | 3 (2 0 1) | 2,202 | No |
| Active | 28 Charolais Cir (DU) | \$825,000 | N/A | N/A | \$402.24 | N/A | 3 | 3 (2 0 1) | 2,051 | No |
| Active | 1071 June Creek Rd (SF) | \$1,150,000 | N/A | N/A | \$370.61 | N/A | 4 | 5 (4 0 1) | 3,103 | No |
| Active | 130 Longhorn Rd (SF) | \$1,300,000 | N/A | N/A | \$424.98 | N/A | 4 | 4 (2 1 1) | 3,059 | No |
| Active | 133 Charolais Cir (SF) | \$1,850,000 | N/A | N/A | \$377.17 | N/A | 5 | 5 (2 2 1) | 4,905 | No |
| UC | 260 Buckboard Rd #B3 (CD) | \$575,000 | N/A | N/A | \$431.36 | N/A | 2 | 2 (2 0 0) | 1,333 | No |
| *UC | 44 Singletree Rd (DU) | \$850,000 | N/A | N/A | \$367.97 | N/A | 3 | 4 (3 0 1) | 2,310 | No |
| Sold | 347 June Creek Rd #W (DU) | \$795,000 | \$790,000 | 5/14/18 | \$338.30 | \$336.17 | 3 | 3 (3 0 0) | 2,350 | Partial |
| Sold | 621 Singletree Rd #W (DU) | \$1,065,000 | \$1,065,000 | 4/24/18 | \$514.99 | \$514.99 | 3 | 4 (2 1 1) | 2,068 | No |
| Sold | 48 Rawhide Rd #West (DU) | \$1,185,000 | \$1,185,000 | 5/10/18 | \$578.05 | \$578.05 | 3 | 4 (1 2 1) | 2,050 | No |
| Sold | 311 Foal Cir (DU) | \$1,255,000 | \$1,215,000 | 4/20/18 | \$359.60 | \$348.14 | 4 | 3 (3 0 0) | 3,490 | No |

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Hello *Singletree* Residents!

publisher's note

Happy Independence Day! In this issue, I am excited to celebrate our country, our independence and our amazing neighbors in this wonderful community we call home.

I am thrilled to introduce you to the Provencher family - Matt and Melissa and their kids, Connor, Brody, Catherine and Caroline. Energy and entertainment abound in this fun-filled household and little did I know, the Fourth of July is second only to Christmas as a holiday for the Provenchers!

We cover a lot of territory this month! We learn what inspires Liz Stern to dedicate her time and energy to Roundup River Ranch in Gypsum and Doug Talbot takes us onto the court at the new Pickleball Center at Golden Peak. Hudson Turner shares with us her hobbies, her heroes and her thoughtful philosophy; and Kathryn and Buck Matthews introduce us to the tiniest

mountain lion in Singletree. We also get to know the members of the board for the Singletree Property Owners' Association - a group of dedicated individuals who selflessly give their time and energy to helping to make our neighborhood a great place to live. I hope you enjoy these stories and more this month.

Summer is here and with it, Dog Day Afternoon returns! Please be sure to join us with your faithful 4-legged friend for a fun-filled afternoon at Chip Ramsay Park on Tuesday, July 24.



Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday and a glorious July!

Holly Proctor | Area Director
303-859-3369 | holly.proctor@n2pub.com

JULY contributors

We want to hear from you: **Your** passions, experiences and achievements! *INSIDE Singletree* is not possible without your active and enthusiastic participation – no contribution is too small. Please consider contributing a story featuring your family, pets, kids, travel adventures, athletic accomplishments or volunteer activities in upcoming issues – please email holly.proctor@n2pub.com to participate in your neighborhood publication. Thank you!



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Allie Decent
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Matt and Melissa Provencher
Meet Your Neighbors



Hudson Turner
Kids' Corner



Lori Fennessey
Sponsor Spotlight



Wendell and Barbara Murray
Home of the Month



Liz Stern
Who's Making a Difference



Kathryn and Buckner Matthews
Precious Pets



Doug Talbot
Athlete Spotlight

you are invited

DOG DAY AFTERNOON in SINGLETREE

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meet your neighbors

Photography by Olga Barron Photography Inc.



Matt, Melissa, Connor, Brody, Catherine and Caroline PROVENCHER

Although they met in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, it would be more than 20 years before Matt and Melissa Provencher would call the mountains their home. After time spent on both the East and West Coasts with a few stops in between, the Provenchers and their four children moved to the Vail Valley in the summer of 2016 and love their new mountain home.

Melissa was born in Florida and lived in the south for much of her childhood. Her family eventually moved to the northeast and settled in upstate New York where she learned to ski on ice and enjoyed the beautiful summers sailing on the Finger Lakes. Melissa attended Cornell University where she studied government and economics. After college, she went to work for a large chemical company in Labor Relations outside of New York City.

Matt was born and raised in New England. He grew up in small town outside of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He enjoyed skiing, hiking and biking all around his seacoast home. He left New Hampshire after high school to attend the United States Naval Academy where he majored in Electrical Engineering and rowed varsity crew. Upon graduation from Annapolis, Matt returned to his home state to attend Dartmouth Medical School. It was on a weekend trip to the White Mountains to visit college friends that Melissa met Matt.



Matt and Melissa spent two years commuting between Hanover and Connecticut, where Melissa was in law school, before getting married. Just weeks after their wedding, Matt graduated from medical school and re-entered the Navy completing his internship at the Naval Hospital in San Diego. Melissa transferred to the University of San Diego School of Law and they happily settled into life in Southern California on Coronado Island, vowing to return to the East Coast as soon as the Navy would allow.

Fast forward almost fourteen years, the Provenchers were still in Coronado. Apart from short stints in both Okinawa, Japan and Chicago, they happily made Coronado home. After completing his Orthopaedic Surgery training, Matt became the Director of Sports Medicine at the Naval Hospital. Melissa enjoyed practicing business litigation with a San Diego law firm. More importantly, their family grew to include their two boys – Connor and Brody, and their twin girls – Caroline and Catherine.

Despite loving their life at the beach, it was sort of the unspoken rule that most vacations would be spent heading to the mountains and seeking out snow in the winter. The Provenchers enjoyed their trips to explore various ski towns out west including Vail, Big



•••

Sky, Mammoth, Tahoe, and Park City. At the conclusion of Matt's Naval career in 2013, the Provenchers decided to move back to the Northeast – closer to family and snow - and make Boston their new home. Matt accepted a position as Director of Sports Medicine with Massachusetts General Hospital and the New England Patriots. Needless to say, his California-born children who had worn Tom Brady jerseys since infancy were thrilled!

They settled in Weston, Massachusetts where they traded weekends at the beach for apple picking, hiking in the White Mountains, and an occasional Patriots or Bruins game. In the winter, they traveled most weekends to ski at Waterville Valley in New Hampshire. The family so enjoyed their ski weekends at Waterville Valley that the decision to move to Vail was an easy one. Matt accepted a job with the Steadman Clinic and the family moved to the Valley in the summer of 2016.

As they prepared for their move, the family quickly identified Singletree as their neighborhood of choice. During the house hunting process, they noticed people out in their yards, biking around the neighborhood or on the golf course. They soon found a home on Buckboard Road where the Chuck and Leslie Madison had raised their family. After a few updates, the Provenchers settled in just in time for Christmas 2016.

The Provencher children quickly adjusted to their new life in the mountains. Their love of all things sports and the welcoming community made their transition relatively seamless. The children all attend the Vail Mountain School and have enjoyed making friends all over the Valley through school, sports and various community activities.

Connor – the oldest – is 14 and will be a freshman at VMS next year. An avid skier, Connor was thrilled when his move to the mountains was also to an area where lacrosse - his favorite sport – had such an active club. He has enjoyed traveling and playing lacrosse with his Vail lax team. He is looking forward to playing both soccer and lacrosse for VMS next year, while regularly checking his Epic mix to ensure he leads the family in vertical feet at all times.

The next in line, Brody is 11 and will be in sixth grade at VMS next year. Much like his brother, he prefers to go through life with a ball in his hand or at his feet. Brody will play soccer, basketball and lacrosse for VMS middle school next year. He also enjoys both alpine and Nordic skiing.

Caroline and Catherine are 8 and will be in fourth grade at VMS next year. They, too, have embraced life in the mountains and now are hard to keep up with on the slopes. They also enjoy lacrosse, soccer, Nordic skiing and ice skating and the many offerings at the wonderful recreation center just minutes from the house.

Matt, whose orthopedic sports practice focuses primarily on complex shoulder and knee issues, appreciates his active patient population in the Valley. He often compares his patients here to his

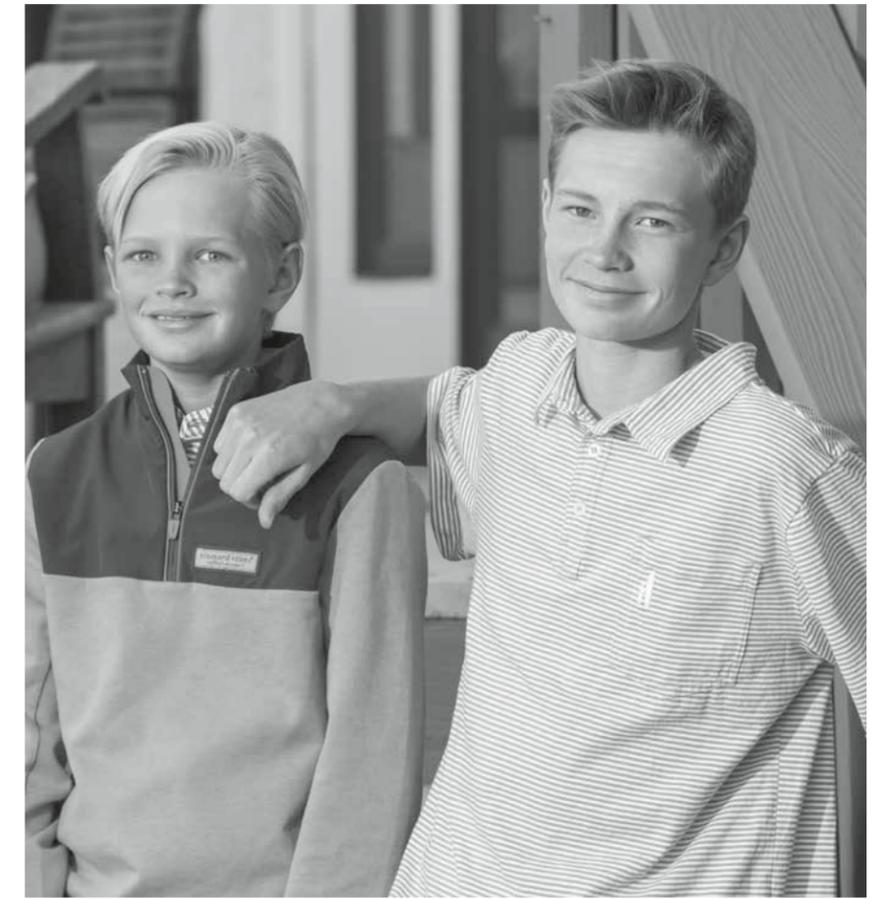


Navy Seal patients in terms of their drive and desire to get back on the hill or trail after surgery. Melissa has enjoyed getting involved at VMS on the annual gala leadership committee and in her children's classes. For fun, Matt and Melissa spend much of their time just trying to keep up with their brood on the ski slopes and sidelines. They also love exploring the seemingly infinite number of hikes, bike rides and outdoor adventures just out their back door!

The Provenchers were thrilled to be asked to participate in the 4th of July issue of *INSIDE Singletree*. They still spend summers back in Coronado, a very proud military community, where the fourth of July rivals Christmas in terms of important holidays. The community there, much like here, is especially mindful of the sacrifices made by many in the military and beyond so that we all can enjoy freedom and abundance of life in places like the beautiful Vail Valley. The Provenchers feel so fortunate to be part of such an amazing community like Singletree!



Get to know your neighbors by featuring your family in the next available issue! Email holly.proctor@n2pub.com to share your family story with your community.



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Hudson Turner
PRACTICES
Peace and Positivity



Hello Readers! This month we had the privilege to interview Miss Hudson Turner, the 12-year-old daughter of Steve and Cara Turner and big sister to brother, Judah. She just finished up 6th grade at Eagle County Charter Academy. The first thing I notice is her beautifully decorated room, all subtle sparkle, and blue elephants, and a workstation covered in pencils and a Smith-Corona typewriter. This, my friends, is going to be fun!

What hobbies do you have? I like to dance a lot, I dance at Vail Valley Academy of Dance. Oh, I also really enjoy skiing and I love

waterskiing at Lake Iowa near the Great Lakes where my grandparents live. I also love old-fashioned things. I read books, and one was about typewriters and how they are a lost art. So for Christmas, I asked for one, and I got one! I wrote all my Christmas thank-you notes on it and I like to write other things on it and it's just fun to be mixing up the old with the new technology.

Who is your hero, and why? I definitely think I have two, is that okay? Okay, so Mahatma Gandhi, because he changed so much in India just through peace. By being peaceful and starting that movement, he got the Imperialists like Great Britain to give them their country back. Also, Malala (Yousafzai) because she stands up for the rights of women to get educated in countries where they don't want women to go to school.

What is your favorite school subject? I really like social studies, art, and science. I don't have a favorite, but science might be slightly better than the others because I love how it's so connected to nature, and there's always an explanation for almost everything. If there isn't an explanation, we can figure it out and make a hypothesis and test it!

How would you describe your favorite vacation? Oh, that's a good question! Hmm, I think I have two favorites. The first was in California, it was amazing. I also really like Washington D.C. We got to meet our Senator and that was great! I loved seeing the White House and the Capitol. It's a great city, you know? There are so many flowers spotting throughout this cement to cement city. I just love to travel, getting to see the US and seeing other peoples' little worlds is really cool.

What are you most excited for about summer? I am excited to be going to Canada and Alaska on a cruise. My grandparents live in Iowa and they are coming too. I'm excited to see glaciers and national parks. It's in the middle of June, and so I'll be back when this article comes out so anyone can ask me about it!

If you could tell all the grownups reading this something they should always remember or do, what would it be? I would say that when things get stressful, just breathe in what's bad (like lots of work to do or being behind on a project) and then when you breathe out, think about all the positive things and sides to everything. Eventually, all the things that are around you then will be positive thoughts.

What do you love about Singletree? Well, I like the atmosphere. Everybody's happy, kids are always around playing and safe, people are always walking or biking or exercising. It's also really pretty. I love the hiking trails to be close to nature. It's very neighborhoody, you know? I like that all my friends live here.

It was great chatting with you Hudson! Have a great trip...we can't wait to hear about your cruise to Canada and Alaska!

 **Kids say the most amazing things!** And Singletree wants to hear what your kids have to say. Email holly.proctor@n2pub.com to feature your kid in your neighborhood magazine!



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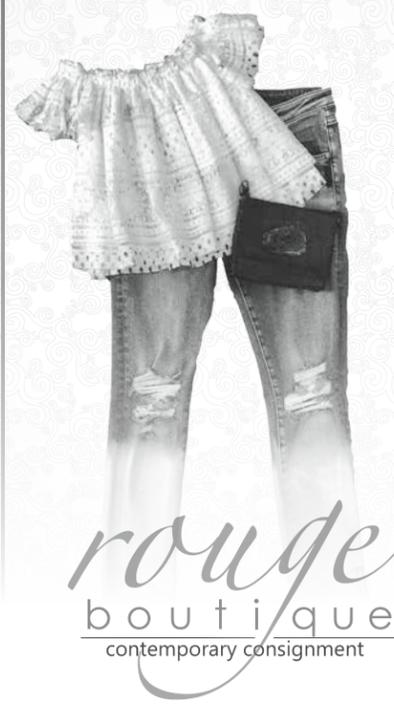
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of Vail residents, but a deep knowledge of the limitations and complexities involved in today's health care environment. She has a unique ability to work with a wide range of clients to explain the myriad of issues with clarity, patience, compassion, in an otherwise overwhelming world.



Lori with her poodle / lhasa apso companion, Lady

Hailing from the East Coast, Lori left behind the slopes of Mt. Snow in Vermont when she arrived 35 years ago to visit a friend in Vail. Little did she know that her willingness to fill in as a server at The First Season Restaurant in Beaver Creek for two weeks over the holidays would ultimately lead to a full time move to Colorado. Like many with similar stories, Lori's career includes 35 years as a children's ski instructor at Vail, 10 years of wine sales, and a plethora of bartending and waiting experiences. You will still see her smiling face today at the Gerald G. Ford Amphitheater during the summer performances!

In 2008, Lori was seeking a new opportunity and found there was a need for someone to help others navigate the muddy waters of health insurance. With a foundation of deep relationships built over her years in the Valley, Lori has not only a keen understanding of the unique needs

Lori's commitment to serving her clients is best expressed by this client: "I have found that whatever endeavor Lori chooses, she approaches it with passion and becomes a deeply informed advocate. She's relentless in discovering the best possible options for her client." Vaughn Miller, ReVolve Carpet and Turf Recycling

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home of the month

Shining in Chaparral:

A LOOK INSIDE THE MURRAY'S REMODEL

Contributed by **Wendell and Barbara Murray**, Singletree Residents
Written by **Allie Decent**, Singletree Resident
Article Sponsored by **Active Energies Solar LLC**

As soon as I set the appointment to meet Barbara Murray, I know her remodel is going to be exciting. Having sold more than 100 properties in Singletree and more throughout the Vail Valley, Barbara has enjoyed many opportunities to view the most beautifully completed homes in our valley. The Murrays are the original builders of their duplex, so this remodel is especially unique in that respect. "We've been able to build this home in the style that was 'in' during the early 90's, and then bring it up to date with what's 'in' now, which was quite an experience," muses Barbara.

I am greeted on a sunny Saturday morning with a beautifully appointed home settled atop the cul-de-sac like the queen of Chap-

arral. A light dappled pathway takes me through the lush front yard and up to the entrance, with a door the color of thunder. I am welcomed by Barbara and Wendell as I enter a sweeping and sleek entrance that still maintains its original homey charm. A chandelier sparkling with delicate icicles dangles above our heads, and as I turn, I am swept into a dream house. Minimalistic yet comfortable, the Murrays have focused on keeping a clean feel throughout, with richly textured furnishings delineating living spaces. Every piece of furniture and art seems designed for the space, which just makes me feel very zen. The gray wood and white walls contrast nicely and complement the calm textured furnishings.

When I ask Barbara who they hired as the contractor, she replies, "We GM'd this renovation ourselves; there was nothing structural, it was all cosmetic really." Wendell sits at the kitchen counter and chuckles in response, "Yes, but when you do a remodel it tends to spiral out of control." The work took just over a year to complete.

Not only did the Murrays act as the General Managers for their remodel, they also filled the role of designers as well. "The design just came, it evolved," says Barbara as she smooths her hand over the white and gray quartz countertops in the kitchen. "For instance, after I found these countertops, I found these cabinets; but first we had to know what color scheme we wanted to go with and we knew we had to redo the wood trim and doors throughout the house to truly update it."

Barbara and Wendell chose a charcoal Gel Stain to cover their original light maple, instantly modernizing the look of the home. "They (Colorado Coating) put a gray base coat down and feathered the black gel stain into it, giving us this color," Wendell points out. He also mentions that they cut down the wood thickness of the south facing patio doors and windows to lighten the room. Barbara laughs, "Oh, it's messy all right, we had to move out while they were doing it."

The entire house is so very organized and everything has its place. Barbara is happy to show me the massive amounts of storage cleverly designed into the house originally and then replicat-



ed in the new kitchen as well. Color me jealous, the 3-car garage is simply a work of storage art!

But back to the remodel design. Barbara points out the exactness of the quartz countertops, a detail I had yet to notice. "We wanted to match the grain and the veining in the quartz to flow," she says. "We worked with Pental Quartz in Denver and they were simply marvelous." "This remodel was a full-time job," she continues, "and it took months to shop for it. I didn't save anything that we had before, I chose all brand new furniture." I ask her how she kept track of the design over that period of time. "Oh, you can't do it all at once," she remarks seriously. "You can't go in and find exactly what you are looking for that day. You might start by looking for a chair and end up with a chandelier. It's a work in progress. Over a year's time, we collected things we like, because if you go too fast, you make mistakes."

On to the deck. Though, calling this a deck does not do it justice. This outdoor entertainer's dream is complete with an unparalleled view of the Valley, Arrowhead, and the Sawatch Mountain Range beyond. As I turn around, I realize that the house is designed to provide a complete indoor/outdoor experience. From the entryway, guests are led into the living, dining, and kitchen space, where the extra-large sliding panels act as doors and as works of transmutable art, extend the living space to the nature beyond in every season.

As we gaze out to the mountains, I ask Barbara and Wendell what they love most about living in Singletree. "Privacy and views," they say. "I think that the incredibly mature landscaping is what really sets it apart," says Barbara as she settles onto her lounge. "We say to ourselves, where could we go? Where can you be where you look out and feel secluded, yet in reality, are surrounded by a community?"

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Contributed by Liz Stern, Singletree Resident



I first became aware of Paul Newman's Hole in the Wall Gang Camp in the early 1990's. My daughter was a freshman at Colgate University, and at midterm break, her roommate left school suddenly due to the death of her younger brother from brain cancer. When I asked if there was anything I could do, I was told that the family would appreciate donations to a camp in Connecticut for seriously or chronically ill children, where Steven had spent special time in his last few summers. I sent a check in his honor and made it a point to learn more about this organization.



Flash forward about a dozen years. My husband and I had built our dream house in Singletree, I was just retired, and a friend mentioned to me that she and some other people had decided to raise the money to build a "Paul Newman camp" in the valley. I said, "Count me in ... somehow!" Not long after, she drove me to see a magnificent parcel of land up the Colorado River Road from Dotsero, the future home of Roundup River Ranch. Through an enormous amount of work by some very dedicated people, and donor generosity, camp opened its doors in 2011.

Roundup River Ranch provides free year-round programs and camp experiences to children with serious illnesses and their families. It is a place where campers can take a true vacation from being "a patient" and get back to being a kid, and, to quote Paul Newman, "raise a little hell." Camp serves children, aged 7-17, who have illnesses such as cancer, brain tumors, severe asthma and lung disease, diabetes, congenital and acquired heart disease, solid organ transplants and over 30 other diagnoses. They come from 11 states in the Rocky Mountain region and attend sessions based on their individual diagnoses.

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Campers are surrounded by others who have shared their experiences and “get it”. It’s a unique opportunity for new friendships and memories, supported by a state-of-the-art medical facility staffed with medical professionals from Children’s Hospital Colorado and other regional hospitals. These dedicated doctors and nurses give up personal vacation time to be at camp, often providing a familiar and reassuring face to campers and their parents.

To me, one of the most wonderful things about camp is the “intentional programming” which allows children who have often lived fairly constrained lives to challenge themselves with new activities they never thought possible for them. Campers can experience a climbing wall, fishing, boating, archery, art, a zip line and horseback riding. The staff is skilled at customizing and adapting every activity so no child is ever told: “they can’t.” The look on the face of a child usually confined to a wheelchair after their first horseback ride or trip up the climbing wall to zip line back to earth 100 yards away is, to borrow from Master Card, “priceless”. These new adventures make a huge and lasting difference in the lives of children with serious illnesses. Parents report amazing changes in their children’s confidence, self-esteem, independence, and openness to try new things.

Camp could not continue to exist without volunteers. The options are myriad; from kitchen volunteers to cabin counselors and many who work tirelessly to raise the funds to ensure that camp is free to every camper and family. You can volunteer for a day, a week or a summer. In the last ten or so years, I have stuffed envelopes, done filing, sewed decorative quilts and western-themed pillowcases for The Depot (the medical building) and made superhero capes for campers to wear at our annual gala, A Grateful Harvest, held in August. Most gratifying by far though, is volunteering at camp during summer sessions or spring and fall family weekends. I usually work on check-in day to greet and get the children settled in, and then devote my time to teaching art in the Yurt where a wide variety of arts and projects are done.

...



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As a person who historically could be brought to tears by a Hallmark commercial on television, I initially had serious concerns about how I would handle being around these sick children. My fears were unfounded. The camp is the most uplifting place I have ever been or experienced. To see these kids, some of whom might have been hospital patients the week before, joyously singing and dancing gives me a feeling I have never found elsewhere. Many, having spent so much time around adults instead of their peers, also display an exceptional maturity and gratitude to staff and volunteers while at camp and in letters afterward. Needless to say, so do their parents.

I stand in awe of these people who get up every morning to face another day of caring for a sick child in a world of healthy kids who can always go to school or camp and do whatever they choose. My husband and I have children, and now grandchildren, who have often been challenging (and sometimes driven us half

crazy!) but have always been healthy. Camp constantly “refreshes” my gratitude, and allows me to pay back whatever gods or karma have watched over my family all these years.

All of us in Singletree lead very “busy” lives. I invite any and all of you to take at least 15 minutes to view some of the videos on the camp website www.roundupriverranch.org, or a few hours to come with me and tour this amazing place only 38 miles west of our community. Tickets to A Grateful Harvest on August 11, 2018 may still be available when you receive this issue. Of course, any and all donations to help support camp are always welcome and needed. I may be stealing another commercial tagline here, but.....come join the magic!



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meet your SPOA Board

The Singletree Property Owners' Association (SPOA) Board of Directors meets on the fourth Thursday of every month with the Berry Creek Metro District Board to ensure the efforts of the two entities work together to provide our residents with the community, amenities, and social events as fantastic as our sunny days here in Singletree. We sincerely appreciate the time and energy these board members put into helping to make Singletree the outstanding neighborhood it is today. It is our pleasure to introduce your SPOA Board!



JENNIE LONGVILLE MAY

Jennie Longville May, SPOA Board Vice President and local realtor with Berkshire Hathaway, and her family love the convenience of living of Singletree. The girls

are able to walk to school and enjoy all of the amenities Edwards offers local families. In particular, they enjoy the regular Singletree social events. They are pictured here at December's holiday cookie exchange. Jennie looks forward to meeting more of her neighbors at the next free summer concert at the Community Center on July 10, from 6 PM to 8 PM. Jennie invites you to bring a picnic and meet her there!



MELISSA NELSON

Twice elected to the SPOA board, Melissa Nelson, now serves on the Berry Creek Metro District board as well. She and her husband, Kurt, love that their home in Singletree backs to Forest Service managed land. They enjoy heading out the back door every day to hike with

their dogs and take in the spectacular views from our side of the valley. Every day is different, uplifting and beautiful.



COURTNEY HOLM

Singletree is such a unique community filled with beauty, exceptional people, accessible trails, and an unparalleled spirit. Sometimes it's just nice to take a moment to appreciate where we live. My dog and I are smelling the

lilacs in the backyard after a hike up Mesquite. It is an honor to serve such a special community on the SPOA board.



MIKE BUDD

Serving on various Singletree boards over the years, Mike Budd is the current SPOA Board President. Mike and Linda have called Singletree home for over 20 years. They love to have their grandkids visit and enjoy all of Singletree's parks.



KAREN ZAVIS

Karen Zavis, SPOA Board's Treasurer, served on the Design Review Committee prior to serving on the SPOA board. Kaylee, her golden retriever, and Karen love playing ball almost every day at Chip Ramsey Park; truly a doggie del

ight in paradise! Here Kaylee fills in for camera shy Karen...



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Noxious weeds and dandelions are not allowed on any Lot and are to be removed.



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precious pets

Contributed by Kathryn and Buckner Matthews,
Singletree Residents
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We are happy to introduce Willow "Munchie" Matthews. She is a Napoleon or Minuet kitten that was born on January 16 of this year and joined Team Matthews in late March.

After being devastated over losing our sweet 12 year old cat Tuna to oral cancer in February, we knew it was time to find a new pet and distraction. We searched all over and found the world's cutest kitten! A Napoleon cat is a breed of half Persian, half Munchkin. Willow has adorable short legs and the face of an angel! Her long white fur and mane make her look like a tiny lion, and her sassy personality makes her ferocious. She is considered a standard Napoleon with her tiny legs, as not all kittens in the litter have this feature. A while back, Buckner and I watched a show on Animal Planet and saw a Napoleon cat, and instantly fell in love with how quirky they are. Buckner has always loved Corgi dogs for their short legs, so we knew Willow would be the perfect pet for us once we saw her baby kitten photos.

At four months old, she likes to sleep above her mom's head on a pillow every night. Willow is extremely playful, and she will play for hours with her toys before crashing out anywhere from exhaustion. She scales up the couch with her tiny legs and is quite the attraction when guests come over, due to her extreme cuteness. Our favorite is when she stands on her two hind legs and looks like a baby meerkat (aka a mongoose)! It is hilarious. Never in my life did I think I would spend so much time cleaning a cat's eyes, brushing her fur, clipping her nails, giving her baths, and even blow drying her. She is not a fan of the blow dryer. Willow is extremely high maintenance and worth every second!

Did I mention she has a pet space astronaut backpack for exploring the great outdoors? There is nothing better than seeing her poke her fluffy white face through the astronaut helmet bubble. We nicknamed her "Munchie" due to her being part

Munchkin, but also because she flies down the carpet stairs like a hurricane when her food pebbles hit the bowl in the morning for breakfast.

We feel very blessed to have found Willow, and she has adapted very well to her new surroundings. She brings us joy and a lot of laughter. How can you not love a face like that? Willow can sometimes be seen on Winslow sitting in the window sill taking in the beautiful views of Singletree, and loudly meowing to go outside.



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athlete spotlight

Contributed by **Doug Talbot**,
Singletree Resident
Written by **Allie Decent**,
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STAY OUT of the Kitchen!

Pickleball In The Vail Valley: A Sport For All Ages

I walked up from the Golden Peak parking lot and followed the telltale signs of 'tink..tink..tink..tink' echoing from the old tennis courts. They were converted into pickleball courts for the enjoyment of the Vail League and part of the Vail Recreational District's push to integrate this sport into our little valley. The fastest growing sport in America has officially made its way into the hearts of locals. "I just love it," says Ami Daniels, Eagle-Vail resident and personal friend. "This game just gets me out there and it's really fun for a lot of different skill levels." Doug Talbot, Singletree resident and pickleball enthusiast, is simply obsessed with the game. He has been playing for 15 months and is recognized as one of the most improved players, according to Johnny Stevens, son of Jerry, the coordinator of this league.

The game begins with one side serving the pickleball, using the paddle (wood or composite and larger than a ping pong paddle) to hit the pickleball (a light, plastic, hole-covered whiffle ball). To properly serve the ball, the player must keep one foot behind the back line and strike the ball with an underhand swing, aiming at the service court located diagonally over the net and clearing the no-volley zone. Only one fault is allowed. In the case of doubles, both players get to serve once, and then the serve is taken over by the opposing team.

Both sides must allow the pickleball to bounce first before hitting it with the paddle at least one time from the start of the game. Thereafter, players may volley the ball (hit it without allowing it to bounce), provided they are not within the no-volley zone within seven feet of the net, aka the kitchen. A player or team scores points only when they are serving; a game is played to 11 points and must be won by two points.

Doug invites me to play, but I decline to first watch him partner with Ami Daniels. He smacks it across for a



point. He does it again and again, clearly dominating the game and enjoying it immensely. I ask him who got him involved in the sport. "Reggie O'Brien got me into pickleball about 15 months ago. She said, 'Well c'mon, play it!' I had never even heard of it so I went and played and had a great time and it stuck."

The atmosphere at the pickleball center is very welcoming and inclusive, which is something that draws Doug back again and again. "I think it's a great group of people, and you can play with all different levels and somehow it always turns out to be very polite, or of course, very competitive when you move up. Like anything, the more you play, the better you get, and the better you get, the greater exercise it becomes."

I notice players of many ages around the court on a Sunday, though most seem of a retired age. I ask how competitive it could really be when the players aren't really exerting themselves the way I know they do in other racket sports. He laughs genuinely again and replies, "Wisdom comes into it. You can't volley in the kitchen, you have to let the ball bounce. If it bounces in the kitchen, you can go into the kitchen, but that's really the only time you can go there. A lot of players make that mistake. Also, it's such a small court, it keeps the ball in play more than tennis, so you can be in a little bit of a zone."

He mentions that he sees some very good pickleball players not take more than a few steps here and there because they have great anticipation and work on a team very well. Like anything else, there's a learning curve. Doug explains, "When people first start playing, they remember how agile they were when they were young, and they don't have the respect for their body's abilities now and expect it to perform just like it did before. But because it's a smaller court than tennis, there isn't as much startling movement once you are good at this sport. That's one of the nice things about pickleball; old people with a couple years of experience can be competitive against the younger people flinging themselves around."

Ultimately, I did partner with Doug to play a game of pickleball. Yes, I did fall tremendously in a backward barrel roll during the

game because I 'flung myself around' trying to volley a good return. Yes, I stepped into the kitchen and hit the ball before it bounced, rendering the rest of that whole volley void. Yes, I missed more than one ball as my muscle memory played tricks on me and kept anticipating a squash racquet in my hand from my college days and not a pickleball paddle. And yes, I made Doug lose the game. Am I going to return this summer? You bet.

Visit www.vailrec.com for additional information regarding the Vail Valley pickleball program.



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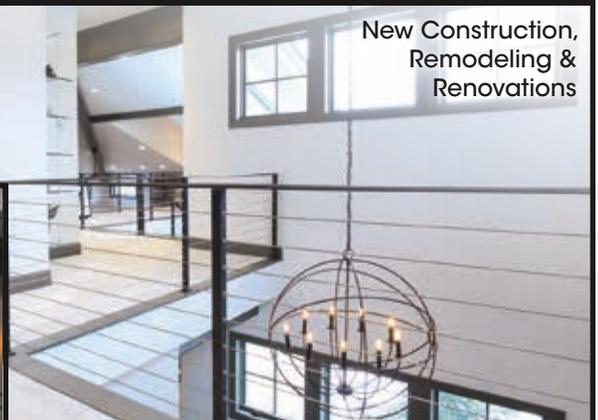
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