

# INSIDE *Singletree*

AUGUST 2020

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SINGLETREE



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FAMILY

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Sold twice as many  
 properties in Singletree in  
 2019 as each of the next 3 top producing  
 brokers in the neighborhood.

## Properties Under Contract in Singletree as of 6.10.20\*

Address	Property Type	Beds	Baths	Square Feet	List Price	List Price/SqFt	Furnished	Garage Stalls	Days On Market
110 Stetson Drive	Duplex	4	3	2,078	\$799,000	\$385	Unfurnished	2	96
411 Longhorn Road	Duplex	3	4	2,529	\$800,000	\$316	Unfurnished	2	16
1110 June Creek Road	Duplex	4	3	2,420	\$875,000	\$362	Unfurnished	1	31
48 Charolais Circle	Duplex	3	3	1,954	\$935,000	\$479	Unfurnished	2	6
40 June Creek Road	Duplex	5	4	2,710	\$996,000	\$368	Unfurnished	2	89
544 Charolais Circle	Single Family	3	3	2,553	\$997,000	\$391	Unfurnished	2	5
<b>310 Longhorn Road</b>	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,436</b>	<b>\$1,025,000</b>	<b>\$421</b>	<b>Unfurnished</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>30 Foal Circle</b>	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3,914</b>	<b>\$1,290,000</b>	<b>\$330</b>	<b>Partially</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>72</b>
751 Singletree Road	Single Family	3	4	2,940	\$1,460,000	\$497	Partially	2	5
191 Chaparral Road	Duplex	5	4	3,142	\$1,500,000	\$477	Partially	3	31
<b>141 Pinto Drive</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4,460</b>	<b>\$1,695,000</b>	<b>\$380</b>	<b>Fully</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>120</b>

\*Properties under contract as of 6.10.20.

\*\*Properties bolded were listed or sold by Happy Power.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Medical

Vail Valley Medical Center 970-476-2451  
 Emergency 970-476-8065  
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### Eagle County

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 June Creek Elementary School 970-328-2980  
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 Comcast Service Center 888-824-4010  
 CenturyLink 855-707-4993  
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# Neighborhood Sponsor INDEX

This Index is created to provide an easy reference for you when searching for a trusted neighborhood vendor to use; these local businesses are proud to partner with the community and to make this magazine possible. Take a minute to familiarize yourself with these businesses sponsoring *INSIDE Singletree* and be sure to call on them when you are in need of their products or services. And of course, please remember to thank them for supporting *INSIDE Singletree*!

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**publisher's note**

# HELLO

*Singletree Residents!*

Happy August!

I am so excited to introduce you to the Thompson family. Michael and Emily Thompson, together with their 4-month-old twins, Henry and Hudson, are the epitome of a young family brimming with fun and giggles. Here we learn the story of how Singletree local, Michael, and Colorado native, Emily, came to meet and to make their home in the neighborhood.

Looking for motivation? Alyssa Larson shares her journey to health and fitness beginning two years ago, ultimately leading to the opportunity to fulfill her dream of a walk on the runway. You will find her story truly inspiring as she relays not only her commitment to physical fitness but mental and emotional strength as well.

Talk about perseverance! Dena Raitman, together with her sons, Brian and Ross, let us in on the story of the little gallery that could: the Raitman Art Galleries. With locations in both Vail and Breckenridge, this family has overcome many obstacles to become one of the most popular fine art galleries in the Valley. Speaking of art, Raymond Blesz took matters into his own hands as he foresaw the potential impact of the pandemic on the world of art and offered Vail locals an opportunity to stay connected to art through his at-home garage art exhibit.

In this issue, you will also meet Taymas, an English Springer Spaniel puppy who entertained the Austen household with his antics amidst COVID-19, a much-welcomed distraction during the stay-at-home order. And we learn the inspiration behind the founding of the Swift Eagle Foundation which led Cathy Dockery to respond to a dream of David Haakenson, ultimately leading to the formation of a local not-for-profit created to support families in financial crisis.

All this and more in this issue of your neighborhood magazine! It may have been a slow start to the summer, but now is the time to enjoy the tail end of the season in all its glory!



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

## YOU ARE INVITED

# *family lawn party*



**Sunday, August 9, 2020**  
**2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**  
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Artful Living



**Taymas and Sally Austen**  
Precious Pets



**Cathy and Ralph Dockery**  
Who's Making a Difference



**Raymond Bleez**  
Celebrating the Arts

## Join The Club! The Contributors' Club, That is...

Every month I look forward to compiling the next issue of *INSIDE Singletree*! I am excited to learn about you, the residents – your families, kids, pets, activities, travels, and more – and I am grateful for your participation. You may have noticed that the magazine has had a few less pages over the past couple of months as a result of the coronavirus, but I am looking to the future and rebuilding **your** neighborhood publication!

Now is a great time to send me new articles to expand each monthly issue! The possibilities are endless! Please consider:

- **Meet Your Neighbors:** We want to get to know all about you!
- **Kids' Corner:** Kids say the wildest things! A brief 'interview,' a few photos, and voila! The makings of a highly entertaining story. Kids love it!
- **Travel Tales:** Let us live vicariously through your adventure! Please share your favorite pre-COVID journey with your neighborhood.
- **Precious Pets:** Everyone's favorite! Have you introduced your pet to the community yet?
- **New to the Neighborhood:** Who's new to your block?
- **Any other story that is meaningful to you:** There are no limits to the imagination!

Please email [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com) to offer an article or nominate a friend or neighbor to be featured in an upcoming issue. Thank you for participating in *INSIDE Singletree*! I look forward to hearing from you!



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## MEREDITH BIZER COUNSELING

Meredith Bizer has been a full- or part-time resident of the Vail Valley for upwards of 20 years and is proud to have settled for the long-term back in the Valley. After earning an MBA from the University of Denver and a varied career in business, Meredith realized a deep-seated unmet desire to help people. Meredith went back to school and

earned a Master's in Counseling from Regis and has been counseling members of our community since early 2019. Meredith offers affordable mental health counseling, specializing in adults and adolescents who are struggling with anxiety, depression, addiction, trauma, life transitions, or general lack of fulfillment.

The hardest part of therapy is making that first call to start it because of the stigma associated with "I need help" taking steps forward in life. Luckily, community members in Eagle County, and specifically in Singletree, are overcoming that stigma and realizing that therapy can be an enlightening and helpful experience that clients can benefit from for years in the future, whether they work with Meredith for just a handful of sessions, long-term, or anywhere in between.

To learn more, please visit [meredithbizercounseling.com](http://meredithbizercounseling.com). You can reach Meredith at **970-306-6507** or email at [Meredith.Bizer@gmail.com](mailto:Meredith.Bizer@gmail.com).



**"When times are good, you should advertise. When times are bad, you must advertise."** This quote by advertising pioneer Bruce Barton was written nearly 100 years ago. Today, marketing guru, Pam Moore, will tell you: **"You can never go wrong by investing in communities and the human beings within them."**

So say the experts over the course of one hundred years. To that end, *INSIDE Singletree* is here to help businesses not only survive the current economic environment but to help them thrive through and beyond the challenges imposed by the coronavirus. Can't decide which marketing channel to choose? The budget won't allow for print, digital marketing, social media, and networking?

Did you know our program provides a fully-integrated approach including a consistent presence in the monthly magazine, digital marketing directly to the residents of the neighborhood, social media recognition, and events to connect residents and business owners – and more! We offer our business partners the unique opportunity to connect with the residents of the Singletree in a way that is personal and relevant to the community.

*INSIDE Singletree* provides a valuable resource for businesses who want to maintain and/or grow their business in this unusual season. Please support your favorite businesses by introducing them to this unique opportunity to engage with the community! **Special offerings available for resident business owners. Reach out to [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com) learn more!**

**Your neighborhood publication would not be possible without the support of our business partners. Please be sure to call on them when you are in need of their products or services. And please email your referrals to [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com). We would love to introduce these quality businesses to other residents in your community!**

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meet your neighbors  
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# Michael, Emily, Henry, Hudson, Nala, and Sadie

Michael is a native to the Vail Valley and has lived in Singletree since 1998 and is a graduate of Battle Mountain High School. He left for a brief period to attend the University of Northern Colorado. Upon graduation, he came back to work for his family business, Mountain Communications, located in Eagle-Vail. Emily, also a native to Colorado, grew up in Littleton and has lived in Singletree since 2017. She is in franchising and currently works for Express Employment Professionals as a Franchise Developer Rep.

Their paths had crossed on numerous occasions but it took a ski weekend and a mutual friend for the universe to finally pull them together. The two of them officially met in January 2015,



right after the Broncos were eliminated from the playoffs and Emily decided to escape city life for the weekend and hit the slopes. Little did she know that an Après at Crazy Mountain would lead to more than sharing a pitcher of beer. It was a weekend to remember because two years later on August 4, 2017, Emily and Michael were married in an iconic Vail wedding at the top of Vail Mountain. Emily and Michael purchased a new home further up the road from their previous home in the spring of 2019. Thank goodness for the much-needed additional space because a few months later they found out they were expecting twins and in January of 2020, they welcomed Henry and Hudson into the world. As they look to the future, they couldn't be more excited to raise their family in the same neighborhood where Michael spent part

of his childhood. They are looking forward to raising their kids in the same close-knit community that Michael so enjoyed while growing up. It's been even more fun for Michael to retrace his steps from childhood and relive those same trails now with his beautiful family.

The couple also couldn't feel more blessed to have Michael's parents, who live nearby in Singletree, to help them with their boys from time to time as well as his brother, Andrew, who lives in Eagle!



Be sure to wave and say hello when you see them out on walks with their boys and their labradoodle, Nala, and chocolate lab, Sadie. They are quick to jump on any opportunity that gets them outside and recreating, especially if it involves meeting new people, whether it be an existing passion or trying a new sport. They live a fairly active lifestyle and with the mountains at their doorstep, they couldn't find a better place to live! Depending on the season, you can generally find them playing a round or two of golf with friends at the Sonnenalp Club or hitting the slopes at Vail or Beaver Creek. They also enjoy paddle boarding, hiking, camping, and hanging by the pool with their boys, and on occasion, Emily and Michael sneak away for a quick mountain bike ride! On top of enjoying the numerous outdoor activities, the Thompsons enjoy socializing with friends and family.

2020 has provided many silver linings for this family as it started with the birth of their kids and it has only gotten better from there! Michael and Emily are looking forward to creating many more memories in the years to come with their boys and are excited to watch them grow up amongst all of you.

Olga Barron Photography Inc.



# MODEL FOR A DAY

## Alyssa Larson's Path To Health And Fitness Leads To The Runway

My dream came true, I got to be a model in the Girl PowHer fashion show in March 2020, something I had wanted for almost 10 years. But first, how I got there.

Over the years, my husband and I have tried a lot of different things to stay healthy. Through years of health issues, including my husband battling Lyme disease from the age of 16 well into his 30s, we have tried IV treatments, ozone therapy, light therapy, hyperbaric chambers, muscle testing, paleo diets, supplements, extreme alternative treatments, and lots of different exercise. We even went to Germany 7 years ago for alternative medical and Lyme disease treatment that wasn't offered at the time in the U.S.

I used to love group exercise. I taught pure barre for three years when the studio in Edwards first opened. I used to train for half marathons like it was my second job. I hiked fourteeners, took backpacking trips, mountain biked, skied 40-plus days a season, took barre, sculpt, cardio kickboxing, ski conditioning, spin, hot yoga, and on and on. But I was bored with all that, it just wasn't cutting it for me or my husband. We felt healthy enough but still exhausted by our daily life, our 2- and 4-year-olds, and our full-time jobs.

In May of 2018, I ran into a girlfriend at the gym who had done all those group classes with me over the years. I hadn't seen her in a while because she was also in the throws of rearing small children, which is busy! It was warm out and she was wearing a tank and jean skirt and my jaw dropped to the floor. She had completely transformed her body, so, of course, I asked her what her secret was and all she told me was that I needed to call her personal trainer and



Before: May 2018



After: July 2018

that she had started lifting heavy weights. The next day, I called this trainer and I set up my assessment, bought a package, and started training a week later. When the trainer asked me what my goals were, all I said was to make me look like my friend. The trainer laughed at me and said, "she is a whole other level." Looking back now, I guess that was the only challenge I needed to light a fire under me.

I started with the basics and made a commitment to be in the gym with my new workouts 3-4x per week. This was no easy feat with a full-time banking career, a household to run, and two young children. I was up at 5:30am most days and not in bed until 10pm. But over the first month, I watched my strength and energy noticeably increase, I wasn't tired anymore. I had been doing PT for hip pain for 6 months prior and was pain-free for the first time after just one month of training. Of course, I was even more motivated than when I first started!

Over the second month, my routine changed to more targeted workouts split into upper body, lower body, and total body metabolic workouts. I was out on my mountain bike a lot as well. As I started to build on my workouts, the only problem was that I felt like I was eating all day long and I could never get full. I was



eating paleo and gluten-free, which I considered to be very healthy and had worked for our family for a while, but it wasn't working anymore.

So, I called my friend, my inspiration to start this transformation, and told her that I was starving and needed to know what to do. My trainer had said multiple times that I needed to be sure to eat enough protein and carbs to support the exercise, but I honestly had no clue what that really meant. This is where I learned that there are so many ways to "eat healthily" and it was eye-opening. I bought a 12-week package with my friend's nutrition coach and started tracking my food by grams of macro-nutrients - protein, carbs, and fat. I was shocked to learn how much fat there is on a paleo diet!

Within a week of counting macros, I wasn't hungry anymore and it was so refreshing. About three weeks after that, I noticed a **huge** change. All of a sudden, I could see the muscle I had been building, I was leaner than I had ever been, and none of my clothes fit. I had dropped an entire dress size and was more fit than I ever thought was possible. I was shocked and it took me looking at a picture of myself to really notice the change.

This is when my husband started doing the same thing as me. He hired the same trainer, bought a package, and started working out 3-4x per week weight training. He also started counting macros, but his goal was to keep muscle mass and not lose weight. His macros were double mine, which is double the calories. I helped him track everything, and after a month of doing it, he had the most energy I have ever seen in him. He had never felt so good in so many years!

About this same time, my hip pain came back with a vengeance after a water skiing fall, and I quickly learned that I was going to need hip surgery to repair a labral tear. I was still in the gym 3-4x per week right up to my surgery date because I just didn't want to lose the progress I had made. My surgery was in the middle of October 2018. I was non-weight bearing for 4 weeks and had intense PT from the day after surgery for 4 months. I asked my PT every day when I could go back to the gym and lift weights. She laughed until she realized I was serious. I was able to go back to the gym 2 months post-op for upper body exercises, with PT sessions focused on the lower body only. I was cleared from PT in mid-February 2019, one of the fastest patients to be cleared, and one of the strongest.



Of course, I was back in the gym with my trainer right away, doing full-body exercise, and ready to continue to build on my progress I had made almost a year ago. I was stronger and more energetic than ever and was able to

build back to pre-surgery exercise in just 8 weeks. After that, I could get on my mountain bike and I had never felt so strong. It was at this point, after a year of doing this, that I finally started to believe that my new body was going to stick around. I cleared out my closet because almost nothing fit and I started over.

Over the next year, I stopped working with the trainer and started learning how to write my own workouts. I kept up with counting macros, and tried a few different things with diet, all still focused around counting macros, including reverse diet, intermittent fasting, carb cycling, and other metabolism-boosting tricks. In the gym, I built up to max weight, then backed off the heavy weights, went from ultra-focused exercises to more dynamic exercises, and ultimately found a place of maintenance with both exercise and diet. I lift 3-4x per week, mountain bike outside, hike with my family, and track my food daily to make sure I hit the right macros to fuel my body and energy levels properly.



It felt good to get to a place of maintenance, to be able to indulge when I wanted to, and know-how to continue to keep my muscle and lean body. And then my dream of almost 10 years, being a model in a local fashion show, came true. From the first time I went to the Vail Valley Medical Center Fashion Show 10 years ago, and every year after, I had wanted to be one of the models. It is a very selective process, and because of my husband's business connections and because of the body I

had worked so hard to build over the last two years, I was selected to be a model in the Girl PowHer Fashion Show on 3/6/20.



I had the time of my life up on stage, wearing beautiful clothes, being made up all day long with hair and makeup, and getting cheered for on stage by our valley, my friends and family. I'm confident in my own skin, my family calls me strong and loves to workout. The other cool thing about my transformation is that once I made it a routine and a habit, it has been easy to manage and maintain long term.

Because of my routine, my dedication, and my knowledge, I was able to keep my workouts and food tracking going at home through COVID. It also gave me mental sanity during an unprecedented time. It was part of my daily schedule with my kindergarten. My husband was able to continue workouts and we were able to stay healthy. Our kids love working out with us; we have made it a family activity. The routines and healthy habits we have established as a family over the past two years have enabled us to cope with almost anything and our family looks forward to a future of good health, strength, connection, and fun.

I would like to Amanda Precourt and Girl PowHer for helping me be a model and get to the runway - it really was my dream come true!



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# IT'S A Family AFFAIR

## at the RAITMAN ART GALLERIES



Brian and Booker, Dena, Ross, and Riley

We have come a long way. We have a long way to go. Grab a cup of coffee, a bowl of ice cream, or a bucket of popcorn. This is the story of how we started. We share it now because it is the story of the little gallery that could. These days, we figure everyone could use some storytime and some positivity as we push forward.

Nearly 13 years ago, we embarked on a new adventure. With wide eyes, open hearts, and big dreams, we moved to Breckenridge, CO. We are the Raitman family and we did something so completely different from everything we had ever known. We opened an art gallery.

It was fall in 2007. Brian had just graduated from Temple University and Ross was still studying at the University of Colorado. Mike and Dena, our parents, were looking for something to do. They figured they would open an art gallery. That it would be fun,

and a wise way to get in-state tuition for Ross' final years in college. They were supposed to go at it alone.

That seemed silly to Brian. As a family, we had fallen head over heels in love with Breckenridge. Living there would be a dream. So he turned down a great job offer on the East Coast and moved back in with his parents. Together, we gave birth to a full-fledged American Dream infused family business.



Dusk - Kristof Kosmowski

With the mission of spreading joy and beauty, we forged relationships with artists that made people laugh. We became friends with artists that made people fall in love with Colorado, just as we had. There was a little 850 square foot space that we could call our own. For the first time, we welcomed people into our fun-filled, four-walled world a few days before Thanksgiving.

One single week of being open went by and our country fell into a deep recession. We didn't know what hit us. But we knew what to do. We smiled through it. We maintained a resolve that we carry with us to this day.

You see, there was no way that we wouldn't continue this dream. It just wasn't possible. We built a place where we could bring our dogs to work and make new friends smile every day. It didn't matter to us that we were a brand new business selling a "non-essential" collection of art. Brian figured he'd live a ski-bum lifestyle, work a lot, and figure it out one day at a time. Mike and Dena were just having fun. All that really mattered was that the people who came into our small gallery had fun, too. We'd get the money sorted out later.

We made it for two years. Sales were few and far between, but enough to give us hope and pay our gallery's bills. Ross had been



Wild Look - 2Wild



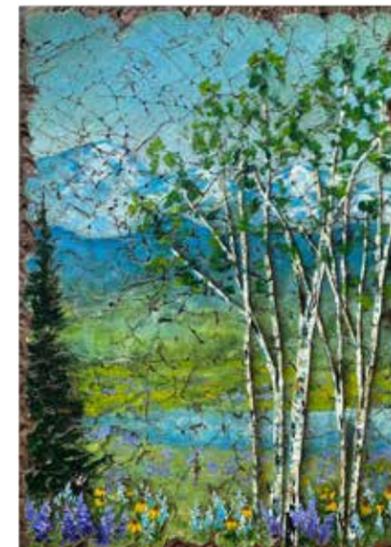
Jubilant Powder - David V. Gonzales



Three Alpine Lakes - Tracy Felix



Mountain Valley Melodies - Rolinda Stotts



**We built our business by being hands-on. By becoming FRIENDS with our visitors. By investing our TIME and our HEARTS in their lives.**

helping out on weekends all this time. In December of 2009, he decided he had had enough with working towards his Master's degree in Architectural Engineering. He too moved to Breckenridge and joined the gallery full time. Our youngest brother, Adam, followed his passions towards civil engineering. Ross joining the family business was a

game-changer.

Our country was moving out of a big recession. We had cut our teeth in it, learned a lot, and kept smiling. We had started to shift our focus a little, from art strictly for the sake of fun and more towards art for the beautification of our world. We drew upon Dena's background in the art world and really started fine-tuning our collection. Dena and Mike

used to drag all three of the Raitman boys to museums and fine-art galleries when they were young. They had collected art for their own home and made sure the boys grew up appreciating life's finer things.

We developed a new creed: if we're going to put art in the gallery, we better want that same exact painting or sculpture in our home. Continuing to refine our collection led to more sales. It fed our hunger for more art, too.

In November of 2011, we had saved up enough money to purchase our neighbor's space. We expanded! We



doubled the size of our gallery and spent countless nights remodeling, rehanging, and building for the future. Up and away right? Our sales almost doubled!

Almost two years later, we took a huge leap. Brian had big plans for his birthday: a second location. It seemed a fitting gift to himself and would come from our whole family given the hard work we all put into our business. We went to Vail. Boom. A space on Bridge Street sat completely empty as if it was beckoning for some art in the window. Our dogs loved it, too. It was a new place to explore and we set to work making it beautiful for our visitors to do just that.

We started to get the sense that we were getting good at what we chose to do for a living. Brian and Ross could finally afford to move out of their parent's basement. Brian was dating his now-wife, Liz, at the time. So Ross moved out of Breckenridge and over to the Vail Valley. Hanging exhibitions kept us up until the wee hours of the morning. If we went home by 3 am, we were thrilled. Working in the winter and summer seasons meant 60, 70, 80 hour work weeks. We still wanted more though. Fueled by the desire to add more art to our collection, we kept our eyes open for more opportunities, more walls to fill.

Spring of 2017 brought us just that. Our South Breckenridge space was about to be vacant. Through a call from a friend in the art world, we made a deal to expand into the space. It had housed galleries for the past three decades. We wanted to continue the tradition of Breckenridge's south Main Street showing off fine works of art. It also meant that we could show a lot more artists.

Three locations meant we needed to train a full-fledged staff. We built our business by being hands-on. By becoming friends with our visitors. By investing our time and our hearts in their lives. Now, we needed to find people to do just that.

Jump forward a few years and we have an incredible crew. We also have a new space in Vail. We jumped at the opportunity to move into a larger location, right next to Gore Creek. We hav-



Riverway Series: Bubble Lake and Slide Lake - Jared and Nicole Davis

en't announced it yet, as the timing has seemed odd given the pause the world is taking, but we bought our neighbor's space in Breckenridge again a couple of months ago. We are in the midst of expanding our original location for the second time. Things are moving slower than planned now, but we'll get it ready to open soon.

In the meantime, we do what we seem to have perfected as a business over all these years, making the best of what we have. Smiling. Spreading beauty and joy. We appreciate all of your support, from reading this and sharing in our journey to having the faith in us and our artists to make your world more beautiful. If there is something you've been thinking about adding to your home, now is a good time to let us know. Our artists have been hard at work in their studios. We have been working behind the scenes to make our galleries better than ever.

We will be here when the world opens back up. We all know that it will. As people, we are all too resilient. We are all too determined. We have created lives that we love living. We will get back to what we know as normal.

We are almost 13 years into our business. We went from having one small gallery to almost 8,000 square feet of art-filled walls and pedestals in three locations. How? Passion. Perseverance. We love the artists we work with. We love you, the people we have met over all these years who we feel are a part of our family. There is absolutely no chance we could do this without you. For that, we thank you.



Sheep Dog in a Red VW Door - DD LaRue

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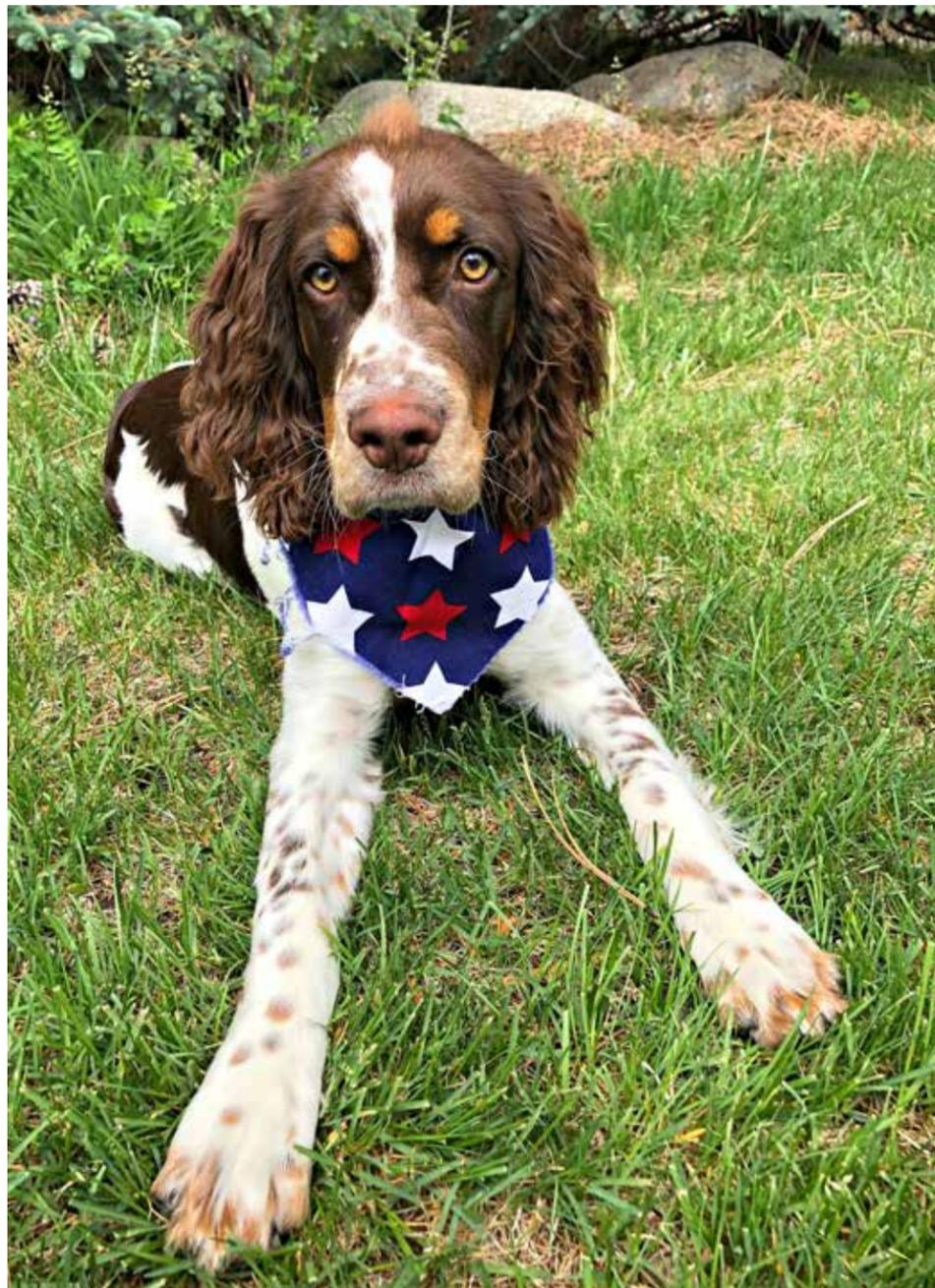
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rolls, a joyous confetti. Beer cartons, a hat, and then lunch. And while my wrist will forever bear the marks of small teeth eager to drag me to some unknown hunting place in my yard, I wouldn't trade a minute for silence or a clean house. Puppies guarantee a wet nose, warm tongue, and smelly kisses when I need a true hug. Who can resist unrestrained joy in the form of a wildly wagging tail, or snores right after a long walk?

For weeks, he was our companion 24/7. We made up new nicknames (Mr. T. honoring his human Dad's penchant for Bloody Mary's is best), chased him, threw balls, let him pull us like waterskiers on a kamikaze mission, kissed him when people were distancing, wiped off the mud, laughed when he refused to go out in the rain (and he needed to do that not decorate my floors), bribed him to sit, come and lie down, clapped when he answered a whistle the 1st, 2nd and 3rd time. Other dogs? That's a work in progress (anyone who wants a play date, just stop by). Mine is lucky though, Dolly, a golden lab across the street, is his own Mrs. Robinson.

So, if you're in need of a smooch, want to race around the dog park, need to know someone loves you always, is ready to cuddle (right after you feed him and rub his belly - I am talking about the dog), buy, beg, or borrow a puppy. I have almost forgotten the walks every 20 minutes, the bottles of vinegar, and endless paper towels, the lost socks ... friendship, in all its many forms, comes from a smile and a wagging tail.

Thank you, Mr. T.



Introduce your pet - be it dog, cat, turtle, horse, or fish - to the neighborhood! Email [holly.proctor@n2pub.com](mailto:holly.proctor@n2pub.com) to feature your favorite companion.

## MR. T. BRINGS A CHANGE OF LIFE ...

precious pets Contributed by **Sally Austen**, Singletree Resident

### *Just When It's Most Needed*

*Advice columns say "stop and smell the roses" and we nod and say ok and move on with our usually hectic lives. Well, a puppy changes all of that. March 18, almost two years to the day after we lost our beloved springer spaniel, Mel, his alter ego arrived in the form of a liver and white bundle of energy. We'd been looking and looking and waiting and, finally, amid the chaos of closures and flight cancellations, the breeder arrived in Denver and passed a squirming 8-week old brother through the open window of my car at the baggage pickup lane at DIA. Suddenly, I was a new Mom, again.*

much-needed focus of our attention. He's a puppy, so, of course, he wanted to play and eat at 6 am. And, we shared his wonder: a first snowfall, a pair of owls flirting from the top of our chimney, leaves blowing that must be chased, fear the first time a sprinkler drenched nearby trees, the temptation of yellow daffodils waving in the wind, powerlessness in the face of almost 20 whitetail deer in a wandering pack, endless starry nights, and a glorious full moon. A velvety quiet. Everything was washed in sunlight and suspense. He brought with him the joys of childhood for us to savor, too.

Taymas, a Kazakh name honoring the stunning golden Eagle who led us hunting on horseback in Mongolia last fall, became the

Through the eyes and nose of a puppy, tennis shoes and leather ski gloves are irresistible chew toys. The scarce toilet paper

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The Swift Eagle Charitable Foundation Board

# “Let’s Do It!” **who’s** making a difference

Contributed by **Ralph and Cathy Dockery**, Singletree Residents with **David Haakenson and Pat Hamilton**  
Article Written by **Tim Swift**, Resident Writer

## CATHY DOCKERY HELPS A DREAM BECOME REALITY



**SWIFT  
EAGLE  
Charitable  
Foundation**

We have all read stories or articles that begin along these lines: “It has always been my dream to ...” or “I finally realized my dream to ...,” but in the case of David Haakenson and the founding of the Swift Eagle Charitable Foundation, it was an actual dream he had in 2004 that led to its creation. The dream told him that it was time to create a nimble, generous charitable foundation to respond to the needs of families and individuals in the Valley that were going through financial stress not of their own making.

Dave held onto this dream for a year slowly and methodically developing a plan for putting it into action. Dave’s next move was

to involve his wife, Pat Hamilton, and 18 of their close friends including Cathy and Ralph Dockery, Singletree residents.

Dave and Pat’s circle of friends had, for years, celebrated together. Be it birthdays, anniversaries, the arrival of children, or weddings, they would assemble to enjoy each other’s company over a beverage or two. An integral part of these gatherings was the exchange of gifts and cards, most of them, in Dave’s words, “silly.” At one of their gatherings, almost in passing, Dave mentioned the dream.

They all started talking about it and the suggestion was made that they consider changing their gift focus from the silly to the

significant, and, rather than buy gifts for each other, they instead pool that cash to provide small, one time grants to those less fortunate in our community. It was Cathy who said, “Let’s do it!” and suggested forming a foundation for that purpose. The rest of the gang was on board and the ball started rolling.

After his friends signed on, Dave’s next move was to reach out to his childhood friend Phil Jackson (yes, **That** Phil Jackson) looking to involve him in some fashion as the two had remained close over the years. During Phil’s days as a player for the New York Knicks, Phil had organized basketball camps on the Lakota Sioux reservation in South Dakota. Because of the wing-like spread of his arms, he was dubbed **Ounacho Wambli**, which means “Swift Eagle” in Lakota. Dave told his old friend Phil of his dream in the hope that Swift Eagle might play some part. Phil agreed and the Swift Eagle Charitable Foundation was born. Phil Jackson continues in the dual role of honorary chairman and inspiration to this day.

That first year, Swift Eagle awarded a grand total of \$4,000, but, since then, they have dispensed more than \$1,000,000 to Eagle County families that are in financial crisis. These grants are for rental assistance, help with car payments, dental expenses, and other personal or living expenses. Families must have been residents of Eagle County for at least one year, but during the current COVID-19 crisis, Swift Eagle will consider waiving this requirement should circumstances require it.

Ralph and Cathy are still on the board and Cathy serves as the Board secretary. Amazingly, the original 18 members made up a board that has remained largely intact since Swift Eagle’s founding. Two members of the original board have passed, and they have added three members over the years. This is a remarkable



The Select Surfaces team



example of continuity that is unique for a not-for-profit and ultimately defines Swift Eagle as the very embodiment of a grassroots organization.

The board has a grant committee that reviews applications and the organization’s office is in Dave and Pat’s home. Pat serves as the Executive Director and as the only paid employee, her salary is paid through a directed administrative grant from a

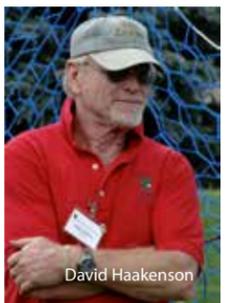
generous donor. That means that virtually 100 percent of the money they raise goes directly to the families in need. In fact, only 5 percent of the money raised goes to expenses.

For the past 12 years, Swift Eagle’s primary fundraising event has been a bocce tournament that has grown over the years into a highly anticipated and much-loved event in Eagle County. This year would have seen a continuation of the tradition if not for the unfortunate intrusion of COVID-19. The pandemic has forced its cancellation and left Swift Eagle bereft of their primary fundraiser. While this is troubling for the many enthusiastic bocce players in the Valley, the loss will not affect Swift Eagle’s grantmaking to the needy families of the Valley.

Swift Eagle is currently partnering with any number of local not-for-profits. They receive referrals from such diverse organizations as the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, Shaw Cancer Center, the Vail Valley Charitable Fund, and Eagle Valley Family Assistance. Due to its relatively small size and lack of bureaucratic structure, grant applications can be easily reviewed and approved in a matter of days rather than weeks or months ensuring that immediate needs can be met with an immediate response which makes Swift Eagle uniquely suited to help in the current crisis the entire country is dealing with.

Swift Eagle, through the efforts of David Haakenson and Pat Hamilton and Cathy and Ralph Dockery, as well as the other board members, are the kind of neighbors who truly give selflessly. They seek neither recognition nor reward other than knowing that through their generosity and commitment, the less fortunate families of Eagle County will have a financial backstop should the need arise.

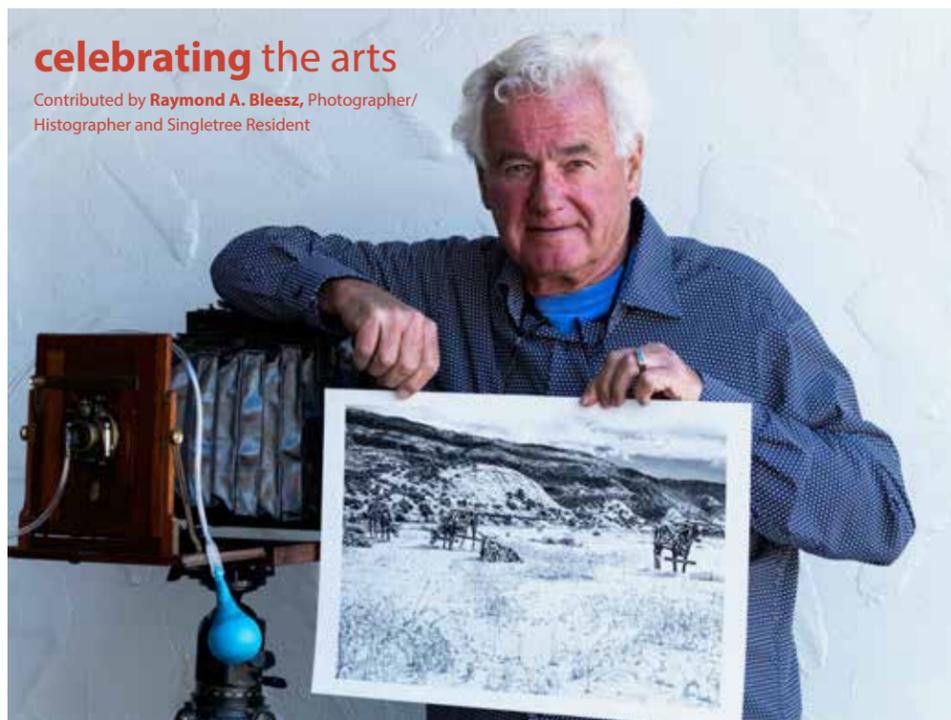
If you would like to help through Swift Eagle or if you are in need of assistance, please visit their website at [www.swifteagle.org](http://www.swifteagle.org).



David Haakenson

## celebrating the arts

Contributed by **Raymond A. Blesz**, Photographer/Histographer and Singletree Resident



Self-portrait by the photographer

# Raymond Blesz Brings Innovation To Vail Valley Art Exhibitions

With the COVID-19 issues befronting galleries, museums, artists in all mediums and photographers, the arts today are in the doldrums, and all entities are dependent upon exposure. New, innovative, and creative outlets from these art sources come in many forms. Artists and photographers are staging shows out of the norms as their livelihood is threatened.

Raymond A. Blesz, Fine Art Photographer and a Founder of the Vail Valley Arts Guild Photographers group, took matters into his own hands and created a private limited neighborhood art exhibit in his garage, a garage “domesticated” with hanging photographic drapes from the garage ceiling and 16 pieces of photographic art as well as three new images, which have yet to be matted and framed. Social distancing was practiced and seating and light refreshments were provided.

The work undertaken for this exhibition required two days of cleaning, prepping, staging, and hanging artwork, which required innovation and creativity. The show was “eclectic” in showing early prints from gelatin negatives from the 1980s to images done with now extinct Polaroid Polapan colored instant transparency film to digital prints. Several portraits were shown,



Cheyenne, Age 5, First Place Rodeo



The Great Hall, Ellis Island

one of which received several accolades: “Cheyenne, Age 5 First Place Rodeo” (digital) as well as “Sisters Playing At Versailles, France,” a silver gelatin print, both images showing “honesty” and “empathy,” traits of a successful photographer.

Scenics were of great interest to the viewers, one being entitled, “The Great Hall, Ellis Island,” from a gelatin negative. The immigration building, an interior photograph of the great hall, saw thousands of people going through the immigration process to gain entry to this country from the world over during its operation. Ellis Island has had a profound impact upon our nation’s history; Raymond’s parents, in their youth, entered this immigration site in the 1920s from France.

With regards to Mr. Peanut, this is an interesting story as of recent; the parent company (Mr. Peanut) is “re-introducing” Mr. Peanut in its national advertising as he has been “in the closet” for a good number of years. That aside, the decal of Mr. Peanut was “pasted” on the front door of the oldest and presently family-run grocery and hardware store in the state of Colorado: Kneisel & Anderson (1883) is a national historic site in Georgetown, the



Mr. Peanut



Rainbow Bread

Silver Queen of the West. The decal was a “constant” door fixture for years – back to when Raymond first saw it in the 1970s.

Of further note, this photograph was taken with Polacolor (Polaroid) Instant transparency film, which was introduced to the general public in 1883. Each roll of 35 mm film came with its own small packet of processing chemistry. After exposure, the film and its packet were loaded into a small hand-cranked machine called an “AutoProcessor.” The time it required to produce a fully developed film ready for mounting varied from between two and five minutes, depending on the type of film. Raymond was experimenting with this new film product when this image of Mr. Peanut was taken. This film was “exceptional,” very unique, favored amongst commercial and fine art photographers but short-lived.

“Rainbow Wonder Bread” was likewise a door decal at Kneisel & Anderson – adjacent to the Mr. Peanut decal; this image



Raymond's Garage Exhibition

was taken at the same time as Mr. Peanut with the same film, Polaroid Polachrome film. Mr. Peanut and Rainbow Wonder Bread, both historical items in our dietary history that we all remem-



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ber, are brought back to life through these photographs.

So one might ask why Raymond took those images of the decals. His answer: “I knew that they are/were ‘historic,’ that they would eventually be removed from the door and that a piece of history would be lost – and my being a “historian” – I observe and take notes (photos) of things which are historic and which will pass into history. One is ‘observant’ if one is either a photographer or a historian.”



Sisters Playing At Versailles, France

Further, he explains, “I took those photos because I lived in Georgetown for 20 years; I was known for my being the town ‘documentary photographer.’ I also had dealings with the state Historical Society – Georgetown being a National Historic District – so photographing was ‘common’ to me. I also owned a NHD commercial building directly across the street from the K & A store. My building was composed of retail spaces, living quarters above the store and I had my photo gallery as well as my darkroom in the building. So I was doing a lot of photo work at that time of the decals.”

Raymond’s Singletree Garage Art Exhibition was the first in the community. The photographer hopes for further showings in the interest of gaining renewed public awareness of the arts in the Vail Valley, CO. These images are framed and available for sale; please contact Raymond at bleszr@comcast.net for additional information.

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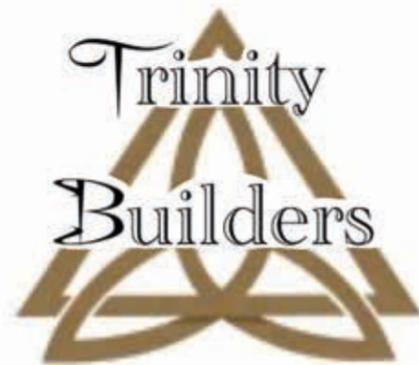
Birthday Girl Ann (left) with Bette

neighbors celebrating neighbors  
**Happy Birthday,  
 Ann And Abby!**

On a glorious day in May, Singletree friends gathered to celebrate birthdays for Abby Dixon and Ann Evans (while observing socially distanced protocol). Sandy Gaylord, Connie Bergh, Bette McColley and Deb Robbins were there to celebrate with the guests of honor. What a beautiful day to celebrate special friends!



Birthday Girl Abby (with the blue tiara) with Sandy and Connie



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# AS AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Singletree seeks to respect all its residents and give them access to the community's resources. Singletree also seeks to engage all the owners in decision-making processes that affect the community. Through the amenities and social events Singletree seeks to improve everyone's social connect- edness and belonging.

The Metro District and Property Owners Association boards hope that you feel safe, respect- ed, and comfortable living here. Please know

that while we are physically distant right now, we look forward to saying "hello" to neighbors on the streets and trails, and we all look forward to socializing together in closer proxim- ity when the time is appropriate.

If you would like to get more involved, you can join the joint Metro District and Proper- ty Owners Association board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of most months at 3 PM. You can learn more about Singletree on the website, [www.singletreetoday.com](http://www.singletreetoday.com).

# SINGLETREE

**Berry Creek Metro District and Singletree Property Owners' Association**

1010 Berry Creek Road at the Community Center

[www.singletreetoday.com](http://www.singletreetoday.com)

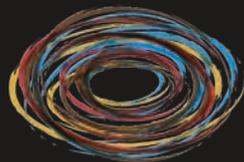
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